DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 456 342 CG 031 085

AUTHOR	Mullis, Fran, Ed.
TITLE	GSCA (Georgia School Counselors Association) Journal, 2000.
INSTITUTION	Georgia School Counselors Association, Conyers.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	101p.; Published annually.
AVAILABLE FROM	Georgia School Counselors Association, P.O. Box 81609, Conyers, GA 30013. For full text: http://www.ga.schoolcounselors.com.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	GSCA Journal; v2 n1 Fall 2000
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adventure Education; Career Counseling; Conflict Resolution; *Counselor Training; Cultural Pluralism; *Elementary Secondary Education; Portfolios (Background Materials); Professional Associations; *Professional Development; Program Development; *School Counseling; School Safety; Stress Management
IDENTIFIERS	Georgia

ABSTRACT

This document serves as a supportive tool for school counselors and their programs. It focuses on counseling issues and ideas, and has a particular emphasis on ideas for best practice. It also serves an important role in promoting the school counseling profession. This issue includes the following articles: (1) "Format for the Future: Developing Portfolios for the Changing Roles of School Counselors in the 21st Century" (Susan R. Boes, Carol VanZile-Tamsen, and C. Marie Jackson); (2) "Growing a Good Counseling Program" (Brian Law, Rhea Wagahoff, Michael Creamer, and Jean Allen); (3) "Keeping the Customers Satisfied...Implementing a Customer-Focused Performance-Based Middle School Guidance and Counseling Program" (Norma Y. Holder); (4) "The School Counselor's Response to the Indirect Exposure of Children to Violence and Natural Disaster" (Dana Edwards); (5) "Project IMPROVE: Helping Students Feel Safe in the School Cafeteria and on the School Buses" (Sheila W. Veatch); (6) "Peer Mediation in an Alternative School" (Jacqueline J. Carver); (7) "GSCEPs...Georgia School Counselors Effective Practices" (Dana Edwards); (8) "Anger Management Groups in Middle School" (Donna Wilson Ratliff); (9) "Groups for Children with ADHD" (Claudia K. Adams); (10) "Stress Management for Children Coping with Life-Threatening Illness or Disability within the Family" (Debra W. Thompson); (11) Adventure Based Counseling Groups in the Middle School" (Barbara Wolff Watters); (12) "Career Guidance: A Great Motivator!" (Judith Morris-Reichenbach); (13) "Cultural Diversity: Effective Activities To Promote Cultural Awareness" (Debra D. Delaine); (14) "Creating a New Circle of Friends" (Joan S. Gill, Andra P. Harris, and Sally B. Mazor). (Contains 16 appendixes and 96 references.) (JDM)

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Georgia School Counselors Association

Journal

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Volume 2, Number 1 Fall, 2000

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From the Journal Editor

On behalf of the editorial board, I thank each of the contributors to this issue of the *GSCA Journal*. The number of articles in this issue indicates the remarkable response to my call for articles. Five of the articles are based on highly rated programs presented by the authors at the 1999 GSCA Fall Conference. Included in this issue is an informative article on developing portfolios that are useful not only for potential employment, but also for evaluation of counseling programs. Two articles describe counseling programs, two discuss issues related to helping students feel safe, and one outlines the use of a peer mediation program in an alternative school. Four articles describe small group counseling for students who need help managing anger, for children with ADHD, for children who are coping with illness or disability within the family, and for students for whom adventure based activities are appropriate. Career guidance activities as motivators for at-risk students, diversity awareness activities, and activities for students who are new to a school complete this information packed issue.

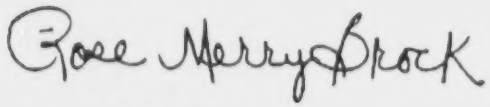
I would like to welcome Dr. Dana Edwards as the new GSCEPs editor. I know that you will find the samples of needs assessments, evaluations, and brief counseling activities that she has collected for the column very useful. Thank you editorial board members for your hard work on this issue.

Fran Mullis
Editor

From your GSCA President

In the spirit of illumination and enlightenment, I invite each of you to peruse this issue of the *GSCA Journal* and extract the significant meaning of each article. This is a very special Journal; it is the first issue of the new century. These research-based articles have been submitted to validate, elevate, and illuminate. I further encourage you to share these findings with a colleague or friend and employ selected strategies into your counseling program.

On behalf of the Executive Board of GSCA, I extend a warm thanks to Dr. Fran Mullis and the editorial board for their hard work in producing the seventh issue of the *GSCA Journal*. Likewise, kudos are extended to the membership for remaining steadfast, committed, and dedicated to the counseling profession. The GSCA Journal will prove to be beneficial as we deliberate over ideas and concerns paramount to our school, family, and communities..."The Power is in our Hands".



Rose Merry Brock
President, 2000-2001
Georgia School Counselors Association

Format for the Future: Developing Portfolios for the Changing Roles of School Counselors in the 21st Century

Susan R. Boes, PhD, NCC, LPC
Carol VanZile-Tamsen
C. Marie Jackson

Certain professionals often use portfolios as a tool for potential employment demonstrating talent, skills, and achievements (Coleman, 1996; Schindler, 1997; Worthen, Borg, & White, 1993). For example, an artist's portfolio demonstrates not only his or her knowledge but also how he or she puts that knowledge into practice in varying contexts (Meadows, Dyal, & Wright, 1998). Portfolios have recently gained significant backing in the field of education and are being used for assessment purposes (Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991) in response to demands for alternative means of evaluating student learning (Worthen et al., 1993) and have gained support as documentation of teaching effectiveness (Collins, 1992; Lumpkin & Scherm, 1999). Brown and Irby (1995) suggested using portfolios for assessment and improvement of administrators' work as well as for career development. Portfolios are also used for student assessment in magnet schools. Magnuson (1997) reports the successful use of portfolios for the inclusion of guidance elements in a laboratory school. The purpose of this paper is to outline how portfolios can be used as a tool to highlight counseling skills during the job search process. Other purposes include a review of various formats for portfolio development and the delineation of a portfolio format for the transformed 21st Century school counselor based on emerging roles.

Current trends in counseling assessment include qualitative methods that are viewed as more holistic and flexible, and that involve the developer. Additionally, they can be applied in various ways (Goldman, 1992) one of which might be portfolios. Recently, portfolios have been used in counseling programs (Baltimore, Hickson, George, & Crutchfield, 1996a, 1996b; Carney, Cobia, & Shannon, 1996a, 1996b) for

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assessment of student work as additive pieces to quantitative methods of assessment. Other uses for portfolios in counseling programs include use as a school counseling program evaluation (Baltimore et al., 1996b; Rhyne-Winkler & Wooten, 1996) and as a means of presenting work samples to prospective employers by counselors on job interviews (Carney et al., 1996a; Rhyne-Winkler & Wooten, 1996). Alschuler (1996) suggested a portfolio providing evidence of formative and summative counseling skills along with self-reflections is a powerful tool when competing for jobs. Carney et al. (1996a) suggested including a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling curriculum in the portfolio. This work sample can be used to open a discussion with a principal or other interviewer as evidence of one's ability to develop, manage and assess programs. Collins (1992) determined that a portfolio used as an employment tool could be the means to stimulate discussion about the interviewee's competencies.

In a study comparing portfolios, self-assessment, and peer-assessment as predictors of on-the-job competence, portfolios were found to be significantly better predictors of performance success in the workplace for 27 participants. The concrete evidence displayed in the portfolios provided functional information to predict success for job performance. Also, the portfolios in this study focused on personal reflections, which indicated more realistically the strengths and weaknesses of the individual who prepared the portfolio (Tillema, 1998).

CATEGORIES FOR INCLUSION

There are a variety of categories for counseling portfolios. This variety is as diverse as the intentions of the portfolio. The range is limitless and variety builds a more complete portrait of the developer (Worthen et al., 1993). Suggestions for counseling portfolios include CACREP core areas (Carney et al., 1996a) or more general content areas of school counseling including program planning, counseling, student appraisal, and professional development (Rhyne-Winkler & Wooten, 1996). Steigerwald (1997) emphasized broad categories as academics, evaluations, and innovative creations. Baltimore et al. (1996a) suggested including a goal statement, philosophy, evaluations by self and others, and relevant course work. Videotapes of guidance lessons could be another item for inclusion. Our suggestions for content categorization is the use of five arenas with emerging roles for the school counselor to include leadership, advocacy, teaming and collaboration, counseling and coordination, and assessment and use of data which we will outline below (The National Initiative for School Counseling, 1997).

PREPARATION OF THE PORTFOLIO

Portfolios need a professional appearance. To gain this it is important to decide on an effective format while remaining brief (Lumpkin & Scherm, 1999). Portfolios should be kept simple and portable. A large binder displaying the items with reflective statements introducing the work may be all that is necessary (Cushman, 1999). Steigerwald (1997) promoted preparation of the portfolio, if used as an employment tool, during the educational program because of the benefit of having most or all of the work completed before encountering the time-consuming job search and interview

process. She also suggested adopting a "documenting attitude" so that experiences are not taken for granted and professional reflection becomes a part of the process (p. 30). Instructors in counseling programs can help foster the development by introducing the mechanics of the portfolios to students early in the program, preferably during the initial introduction to the counseling profession course (Personal communication, Paul Phillips, May 16, 1999). By documenting items as they are accomplished the developer will have time to focus on the job search and interview process at the appropriate time.

Development involves commitment, time, and thoughtful processing but it can be simplified by careful preparation. Steigerwald suggested (1997) deciding on appropriate categories and setting up the means to collect items before beginning work on the portfolio. Keeping a filing container available for items as they are collected will make the final assembly easier. Initially the work may mean searching files for past papers and organizing items for inclusion. Keeping a portfolio current and accurate by regular evaluation and updating is equally important (Rhyne-Winkler & Wooten, 1996; Seldin, 1991). According to Worthen et al. (1993) arrangement of items within the portfolio is important as it may indicate the student's focus.

Cushman (1999) suggests beginning the portfolio with a goal or standard and periodically referring back to the goal or standard as progress on the development is assessed. Writing an introduction to the portfolio is another suggestion that could include a description of the setting and rationale for its preparation. After preparing the portfolio contents with reflections, present the portfolio to a colleague for feedback so that revisions and adjustments may be made prior to presenting it to someone for professional review. This feedback by a colleague may be considered part of the interview rehearsal as the colleague may ask about items, the purpose of the contents, or other areas that may need additional development (see Table 1).

TABLE 1

Practical Suggestions for Counseling Students in Developing and Using a Portfolio as an Interviewing Tool

- Begin early.
- Outline your philosophy of school counseling and delineate sections and documentation.
- Refine your philosophy and documentation throughout the program.
- Include reflective statements for each section.
- Keep material and completed assignments for each course separate.
- Choose items for inclusion most representative of you as a potential school counselor.
- Ask as advisor or other faculty member to review the portfolio and give feedback.
- Time spent selecting and reflecting on documentation will result in an effective portfolio.
- On interviews use the portfolio to demonstrate your answers to interview questions.
- When in a counseling position, maintain, update, and substitute new

pieces of documentation to document growth as a counselor.

TRANSFORMED SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLES

In the 21st century educational reform has begun to include school-counseling reform (Greer & Richardson, 1992). School counseling reform involves much discussion about the need to transform the roles of the school counselor to more appropriately fit the needs of today's students. Responsibilities advocated for school counselors as we enter the 21st Century are to become leaders, advocates, collaborators, counselors, coordinators, brokers of service, and effective users of data (The National Initiative for Transforming School Counseling, 1997). With new emerging roles it seems appropriate to focus our professional enhancement to this future format. Students in training programs can begin to implement these roles by adopting them to fit their professional portfolio.

A 21ST CENTURY FORMAT FOR PORTFOLIOS

What should counselors be doing? According to the Education Trust's Advisory Council consensus, in the 21st century the arenas for school counselors are leadership, advocacy, teaming and collaboration, counseling and coordination, and assessment and use of data (The National Initiative for School Counseling, 1997). As a future portfolio format these arenas seem appropriate as an outline for depicting the student's success in a school counseling training program through an employment portfolio. The leadership arena encompasses the development of school leadership skills such as planning, organizing, coordinating, presenting, and delivering programs that generate systemic change (The National Initiative for School Counseling, 1997). Documentation of leadership skills might include implementation plans for school and community prevention programs, career fairs, college days, and programs incorporating social/personal management. These plans could illustrate various phases of the leadership process from planning and organizing to actual program/project delivery. Students might include brochures and other documents developed in this arena during practica/internship experiences.

The advocacy arena focuses on the skills essential to effective social action. These include knowledge of appropriate pathways for empowering individual students and their families to remove barriers to high academic achievement. In addition, an understanding of social action procedures to bring about needed change for groups of individuals must be developed. Valuing high achievement for all and believing in equal access for all students to educational opportunities are essential elements necessary for effective advocacy. The assessment and use of data arena is closely related as it supports the need to identify needs, remove barriers, and secure the necessary resources to support the advocacy role (The National Initiative for School Counseling, 1997). One means of displaying advocacy skills could be presenting evidence that the student's activities affected change in the internship site school. An example of the use of advocacy skills would be to examine a school's gender and ethnic placement into rigorous versus general

courses. Assessment and the use of data can be demonstrated through activities, programs or interventions that assess and utilize measurable goals for student outcomes. The student could include projects such as needs assessments and program evaluations that have included the collection and presentation of data to support change within the school. Other valued documentation could be advocacy action plans supporting needed change for individuals or groups developed for presentation to the appropriate policy makers and/or stakeholders.

In the teaming and collaboration arena skill training focuses on learning about resources and how to cooperate with colleagues to improve student achievement and success in life (The National Initiative for School Counseling, 1997). Items to support this arena can be displays of collaboration with other helpers in the school and community. These could be teachers, peers, school principals and agencies and/or businesses in the community. Consultation skills as well as an understanding of group process, group dynamics, and group leadership skills are necessary underpinnings for successful teaming and collaboration efforts. Valued documentation could include consultation plans, procedural outlines for team meetings, and collaborative action plans.

Counseling and coordination is an important arena which includes brief encounters with individual students, groups and families to address student needs as well as coordination of resources, both human and other, for the advancement of student achievement (The National Initiative for School Counseling, 1997). Counseling and coordination can be demonstrations by individual counseling plans, evaluations by supervisors, case studies to include plans for brokering of services for specific issues, and a completed list of referral services within a community. More detailed examples of documentation of these five arenas are included in the Appendix.

CONCLUSIONS

Limitations of portfolios include the creativity and planning needed to prepare the outline and structure, the means to evaluate, and time required for development (Alschuler, 1996; Carney, Cobia, & Shannon, 1995; Lumpkin & Scherm, 1999; Steigerwald, 1997). Carney et al., (1996a) also suggest a limitation is gathering items without reflecting on the usefulness of the items. Worthen et al. (1993) found those who understand the real value of the portfolio are not concerned with the time spent producing the portfolio. Someone who has in mind attainment of a school counseling position will find the time well spent. Another limitation may be that prospective employers do not have much time to review the portfolio and the developer may become discouraged about the time and effort it took to produce the portfolio. Keeping the contents positive, simple and small in scope may result in the interviewer taking the time to review the material. Additionally, it is important for the developer to realize the portfolio can be an appropriate means to prepare for the interview process. Schindler (1997) suggested the preparation might reveal to the developer how he or she is qualified for the position.

The advantages of preparing a reflective, comprehensive, yet brief portfolio far outweigh the limitations of time, effort and need for creative spirit.

While the contents are valuable examples of the developer's work as gathered over time, the professional growth evolving as the developer reflects on each item to be included is of significant importance whether the portfolio is used for assessment purposes or for the job search. Reflection pieces, when part of an employment portfolio, have value as a way to rehearse answers to interviewer questions and guide discussions with potential employers. Additionally, the portfolio will demonstrate individual strengths and allow the developer to point out areas for improvement. An outline of categories and items to collect that is prepared early in a training program may be the incentive to collect appropriate items for later assembly in a final work. Writing reflective pieces about the items that are included and the rationale for the portfolio may be done along the way or as the cumulative statement in a final term of the individual's training. A review of the reflections and the items within the portfolio before a job interview may act to rehearse the developer for the interview (Schindler, 1997).

Reform issues appropriate to the 21st century call for uniquely different emerging school counselor roles. A portfolio depicting these roles will be the link to appropriate discussions about the reform and the tasks a prospective school counselor will undertake in the future.

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APPENDIX

Portfolio Development around the Five Arenas

(The format of this appendix is based on Carney, Cobia, and Shannon, 1996a.)

1. Documentation of the **Leadership Arena** should include those items that best demonstrate the student's school leadership skills, such as planning, organizing, coordinating, presenting, and delivering programs that generate systemic change.
   Artifact: Development of an internship plan that illustrates the use of these skills in designing and delivering a counseling program.
   Reproduction: Videotape of presentation of such a counseling program.
   Reflection: Evaluation of leadership skills as presented in videotape. Could also include an interpretation of a self-report instrument which includes leadership skills, such as the Strong-Interest Inventory or the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Leadership strengths should be highlighted, as well as ways to further improve leadership skills.

2. Documentation of the **Advocacy Arena** should include those items that best illustrate the counselor's ability to effect social change and advocate for clients by identifying needs, removing

barriers, and fighting for equal access for all students to educational and career opportunities.
Artifact: A letter from the internship site supervisor or evaluations from students and parents indicating that the counselor's actions resulted in a significant change for a client.
Reproduction: A bibliography of Internet sites that can be used by all students to achieve greater academic success ("homework sites"), find career and educational opportunities, and find funding to support educational opportunities.
Reflection: Mission statement outlining the student's commitment to helping all students achieve academic and career goals. Could include personal goals for becoming an advocate.

3. Documentation of the **Assessment and Use of Data Arena** should include items that illustrate the counselor's skill in assessing student needs and collecting, analyzing, and presenting data to provide rationale for advocacy efforts or to provide evidence that counseling programs are effective.
Artifact: Program evaluation project in which student collects data and analyzes it to show the effectiveness of a counseling program.
Reproduction: Videotape of role-play or simulation of how school data (e.g., test scores, daily attendance rates, rates of drug abuse, smoking, alcohol abuse, sexual abuse, etc.) can be used to inform counseling program design.
Reflection: Mission statement summarizing the importance of using data to advocate for student clients, including goals for using data as a future school counselor.

4. Documentation of the **Teaming and Collaboration Arena** should include those items that best illustrate the counselor's skill in locating resources and working with other professionals to improve student achievement and foster student success in life.
Artifact: Counseling plan that involves relying on other professionals within the school (i.e., special education or regular education teachers) or outside of the school (parents, counselors, or services in the community) to provide needed assistance in meeting the needs of a client.
Reproduction: Videotape of role-play exercise in which students represent school counselors, special education teachers, regular education teachers, parents, community counselors, etc. and work together to help a client in the best way possible.
Reflection: Position paper or personal mission statement concerning the importance of teaming and collaboration in meeting students' needs. Can also include goals for emphasizing teaming and collaboration as a future counselor.

5. Documentation of the **Counseling and Coordination Arena** should include those items that best illustrate the individual as an effective school counselor in terms of brief, solution-focused, individual counseling skills and the coordination of resources for the advancement of student achievement.
Artifact: Individual counseling plans, supervisor evaluations, and projects involving the organization of the

counseling office can all be used to document this arena.

Reproduction: Videotape or audiotape of a counseling session, a counseling plan, or an outline for a group counseling intervention can all be used to demonstrate skill in this arena.

Reflection: Personal philosophy of counseling in which student integrates a counseling theory or theories with his/her own approach to individual and group counseling.

Growing a Good Counseling Program

Brian Law
Rhea Wagahoff
Michael Creamer
Jean Allen

Serving as a counselor is somewhat like being a gardener. One must plant seeds that will grow to be full vegetation. A counselor not only plants these seeds, but also must fertilize them with proper programs and guidance. A big chore of gardening is to keep weeds and pests from the plants (children). Empathy and caring are important ingredients in the growth of plants and children. In this article from the Colquitt County Elementary School Counselors, a counselor can be sure to find ideas to help reap abundant harvests in the garden (school).

CAREER AWARENESS

An elementary school counselor's job is to plant seeds in the minds of the students. Career awareness is one opportunity for planting seeds. Schools can plan a Career Week at school each spring on a three-year rotation. The first year the students participate in a vehicle day, with vehicles representing various jobs. A career college is planned for the second year, where the students choose to hear four or five representatives from different jobs, a college, the military, and a technical school. The third year the students participate in the "C" Games, games about careers. In addition to these activities, students have a dress-up day, write about what they want to be, and hear guest speakers in the classrooms.

During Career Week the counselor helps fifth-grade students evaluate their interests and begin looking at specific careers. This is accomplished by using a booklet titled The Career Game Workbook, Explorer Edition (Trow, 1996), six color coded posters, and activity sheets for the students to record their findings. Introducing careers to children is just one kind of seed counselors need to plant.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Counselors are often given the task of implementing character education in the school. Good character is vital to the school setting. Using character initiatives can conquer many problems. Following are three programs that use character traits and reinforce children for using them. The lessons educators teach about getting along and showing good character traits can last a lifetime. Planting good seeds in the minds of children and providing the necessary

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resources enables them to become caring adults and reduce violence and conflicts in society.

BULLDOG BUDDY PROGRAM

The Bulldog Buddy program (BB) is a peer helper program that uses an elementary school's mascot for the namesake. The program is used in fourth and fifth grades.

The BB program is designed with goals to:
- Teach responsibility and other character traits
- Boost self-esteem and promote positive feelings
- Show that helping others can be rewarding
- Show success
- Teach work ethic and career skills
- Motivate academically and behaviorally

At the end of each school year rising fourth and fifth graders are selected for this program on the following criteria:
- Students who don't complete class/homework
- Students who have experienced a family crisis
- Students with low self-esteem/confidence
- Students with behavior problems
- Students who need general social skills
- Students who are non-assertive and shy

The students are trained in three group meetings.

I. "Being a Friendly Helper"
   A. Use the book Becoming a Friendly Helper (Myrick & Bowman, 1981)
      1. What is a BB?
      2. What jobs do I do?
      3. How do you help others?
      4. Give rules (designed to meet your school's needs)
      5. Sign an agreement that students will follow the rules
   B. Responsibility
      1. What is a responsibility?
      2. Give examples of being responsible.
      3. Role-play responsible and non-responsible behaviors
   C. Cooperation
      1. What is cooperation?
      2. Traits of a good co-worker
      3. Explain the difference between helping and bossing
      4. Use activities from Teaching Cooperation Skills (Huggins, 1990)

Students are used on campus to help adults and other students. They may be used to be flag captains, feed fish, deliver items, work in the media center, welcome new students, read to classes, and tutor others. They may be used to help with field days or other special days. Provide a form for faculty members to request helpers when needed. Generally, students do not miss more than 30 minutes of class time twice a week. One important rule is that all work must be made up in order to help. Also, good behavior and a strong work ethic are emphasized.

It is best to have no more than a dozen children in the program. Limit it to one or two grades. Pick only those who are eligible and have a waiting list just in case some students do not work out. Include a variety of races and both sexes. The training is of utmost importance to the success of the program. Spend time in the early phases making sure students know the rules and know what to do.

Teachers tend to buy into the program easily as K-2 teachers need older children to help them. The teachers who have the BB children in their classes use it as a motivator, and overall success has been shown with these children. Children have worked harder to complete work, and behavior problems have decreased. Some may view the program as a reward system, but the rewards are often intrinsic. It offers life long lessons about dealing with and helping other people.

BULLDOG CARD

The Bulldog Card, a cooperative discipline/character program that teaches students to be responsible for their actions, is

used in grades 3-5. Again, the name is derived from the school's mascot. Students are given a 15 number punch card each month with the goal to keep as many numbers as possible during the 20-day period. Students lose numbers when teachers punch the cards after a student breaks a rule. At the end of the month those students who have not lost their cards receive rewards based on the numbers kept. Those who have lost the cards or have lost all 15 punches go to detention during reward time. Rewards and rules are decided among grade groups and enforced consistently. The program is designed to let parents be aware of problems. Parents are told about the card at the beginning of the school year and are encouraged to check their student's card daily or weekly. This vigilance will make stronger children as they grow.

DAWG GONE GOOD CHARACTER

This character education reward program is used in grades P-2 to reward students for showing good character. Faculty and staff members catch children going out of their way to show character traits that are discussed in the school's character education program. When children are caught they get a "paper bone" with their name, teacher's name, and behavior written on it to put in a dog bowl. Each morning a "bone" is drawn and announced with morning announcements. The winner gets a lollypop and a sticker. "Dogs like bones and children like lollypops." All bones are pulled from the bowl and placed on a bulletin board in the hallway for display each month. Every gardener knows you must feed your crops with the best of rewards.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Shootings at Columbine and Conyers, a killing by a second grade student, guns at school! It seems every week there is another tragedy attributed to violence at schools across the country. As more and more children are experiencing conflict at home, substance abuse within the family, having less access to their parents, and having television as their primary source of entertainment and values, schools are seeking answers to the problem of escalating violence. Counselors are challenged to provide effective conflict resolution strategies. Since it is an impossible task for one counselor to mediate each conflict and settle each squabble, the implementation of preventative conflict management programs that reach large numbers of children is the most practical and expedient means of educating children.

Many conflict resolution programs are available, but many are very expensive. Three cost effective, easy to implement programs are Peer Mediation, "I Can Problem Solve" (ICPS) by M.B. Shure (1992), and "Second Step" by K. Beland (1997). Using peer mediation, third grade students receive six hours of instruction in the basics of peer mediation. Selected fourth and fifth graders receive additional training to be peer mediators. "Conflict Resolution: An Elementary School Curriculum" (for grades 3-6) by G. Sadalla (1990) is an excellent resource for implementing this program. ICPS is a curriculum to help children as young as four years old resolve daily conflicts by teaching them how to think in order to solve problems and to understand their own and others' feelings. Dialogues for special situations, games and activities, and communication techniques are provided in the manual. These can be used in primary grades. Upper elementary grades can use "Second Step", a curriculum designed to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in children ages 9-12. It targets three main concepts – empathy, impulse control, and anger management, and employs the use of videos and dialoguing cards with scripts on the back of each lesson card.

All of the above programs have been developed for classroom teachers to present a lesson a day. They also can easily be used by counselors in classrooms, with small or

large groups or with individuals that have specific areas of need. School counselors need to look at the problem of violence in terms of what can be done to prevent these pests and weeds from taking over our happy gardens. These programs serve as good pesticides and herbicides for safe schools.

COUNSELING AND THE INTERNET

Not long ago, there were few school counselors who had access to computers. When there was a computer in the school counselor's office, it was likely used only for record keeping tasks or, perhaps, word processing. With advancement in technology and the addition of computers in many counseling offices, counselors now have access to many sources of information. The most useful advance in technology is, arguably, the internet. The internet is a valuable resource for counselors. However, one must be careful to evaluate the sources of information to ensure they are reputable and trustworthy. There is virtually a bottomless pit of reliable information accessible to assist school counselors in their quest for information.

Across the state, counselors struggle to find sufficient funding to meet the need for counseling materials. The internet is one resource that requires little or no investment and provides school counselors access to many useful ideas and resources. The counselor can find many websites that are useful. Several sites that are applicable to counseling situations will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The first site is one concerning career exploration. It is called the Job Jaunt Game (2000) and was developed by Dr. Linda Quinn http://user.icx.net/~quinn/instruct.htm. The site developer claims that users from elementary age to adults can play the game, but it seems focused more on the upper elementary level with graphics and colors. This site is good for fourth and fifth graders during a career study. After users read the instructions, they click on a door at the bottom of the page and are then directed to the next page. Here users simply enter their age and sex and then use the mouse to click in a box beside statements that describe their likes. Users can choose as many statements as they like but should be encouraged to choose only those statements that really describe them. Once users have selected all the statements that apply they click submit.

After the user clicks submit, the next page appears with a profile of the user based on the statements checked. The user might be a social helper, for example. If the user is categorized as a social helper, a list of jobs will appear that are categorized under the social helper category such as counselor, teacher, social worker, and doctor. The user could then click on one of those jobs to find out information such as salary, education requirements, working conditions, job description, and job outlook. There is a link that will carry the user to the Occupational Outlook Handbook and a list of careers to explore. Social Helpers is one of several different categories that are available. Users are then allowed to print out information about the career of their choice.

Most students show an interest in this site. The site does not require the user to enter any identifiable information. The site is very easy to navigate and an average class needs about 45 minutes to one hour to complete a lesson. It is helpful to have some assistance if possible to ensure all users are where they need to be.

A second site that is helpful for school counselors is the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2000) http://www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/index.htm. The site provides fact sheets for families on issues that affect children, teenagers, and their families. The fact sheets are available in several languages and provide succinct and current information in easy to understand language. Information is available on issues ranging from the adopted child to sexual abuse. This site is very

helpful, easy to navigate, and contains good information on many issues of interest to school counselors. The fact sheets can be reproduced and distributed without cost as long as AACAP is credited.

A third site of interest to school counselors is the National Association of School Psychologists (2000) website http://www.naspweb.org. The site has a search engine where visitors can search for links to safe schools information. This information is very important and every school counselor, regardless of his/her level, should have access to the information available on this site. The site gives parents suggestions on how children react to trauma, what parents can do, suggestions for teens and what teens can do to feel better. The Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA, 2000) http://www.fema.gov/kids /tch_aft.htm also has a site that provides helpful information about how children deal with natural disasters and helpful tips on dealing with children after traumatic events.

Finally, a fourth site is one concerning children and chronic illnesses http://funrsc.fairfield.edu/~jfleitas/ contents.html (2000). The site was created by Joan Fleitas, Ed.D., R.N., Assistant Professor of Nursing at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Connecticut. Its target population is elementary age children with chronic illnesses. The site consists of stories from different children who have a variety of medical conditions. Children can easily navigate through this site without the assistance of adults. The stories are told from the perspectives of the children. The site contains a hospital tour to provide children who may never have been in the hospital an idea of what to expect.

The previously mentioned sites represent a small number of those available. The website addresses of additional sites of interest are in the appendix. Today, as technology is becoming more accessible to school counselors, counselors should utilize this exciting and innovative tool called the internet to benefit themselves and the populations they serve. School counselors across the state should participate in technology training to learn what technology is available to assist counselors and their clients. School counselors should not be left behind in the digital age in which we live. Learning to utilize the latest technology in the field of school counseling is one way to continue growth and produce abundant harvests.

APPENDIX

CAREER INFORMATION:

Job Jaunt Game
http://user.icx.net/~quinn/instruct.htm

American Psychological Association
http://helping.apa.org/

Mental Health Topics
http://www.athealth.com/topics.html

ADD Information
http://www.vh.org/Patients/IHB/Psych/Peds/ ADD.html

Children and Adults with ADD
http://www.chadd.org/

School Psychology Resources Online
http://www.bcpl.lib.md.us/~sandyste/ school_psych.html

Behavioral-Developmental Initiatives
http://www1primenet.com/treat/mh.htm

Pat McClendon's Clinical Social Work
http://users.mis.net/~patmc/school.html

Disorders
http://www.mhsource.com/disorders/

Counselor Resources
http://education.indiana.edu/cas/adol/ counselor.html

ACA
http://www.counseling.org

Family Moves
http://www.vh.org/Patients/IHB/Psych/Peds/FamilyMove.html

American School Counselor Association
http://www.schoolcounselor.org/

School Safety Resources
http://www.schoolcounselor.org/General_Info/schoolsafety.html

National Standards for School Counseling Programs
http://www.schoolcounselor.org/NSSCP/nsscp.html

Georgia Department of Education, Atlanta, Georgia
http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/

Facts For Families
http://www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/index.htm

FEMA FOR KIDS: RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS – After a Disaster: How to Help Child Victims
http://www.fema.gov/kids/tch aft.htm

FEMA FOR KIDS – DISASTER CONNECTION: KIDS TO KIDS
http://www.fema.gov/kids/k2k.htm

Psychology in Daily Life
http://www.apa.org/pubinfo

American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress
http://www.aaets.org

National Association for School Psychologists
http://www.naspweb.org

PARENT SITES

John Rosemond
http://www.rosemond.com/

Divorce Suggestions
http://childparenting.miningco.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://www.theoaktree.com/divkid10.htm

http://childparenting.miningco.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/behavior/divorce.html

Parent Soup
http://www.parentsoup.com

Home Page for The WonderWise Parent
http://www.ksu.edu/wwparent/wondhome.htm

Mental and Emotional Health
http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/texts/guide/toc/toc33.html

Parenting of K-6 Children – Home Page
http://childparenting.miningco.com/

Help Your Child Cope: Divorce and Stepfamilies – Parenting of K-6 Children Net Links:
http://childparenting.miningco.com/msub5a.htm?pid=2803&cob=home

About.com:
http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/behavior/divorce.html

Positive Parenting:
http://positiveparenting.com/index.html

Parenting Matters:
http://lifematters.com/parentn.html

Family:
http://family.com/

Standardized Testing:
http://www.learningshortcuts.com/main.html

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National Association of School Psychologists [Online] Available: http://www.naspweb.org [2000, April 20].

The Federal Emergency Management Association [Online] Available: http://www.fema.gov/kids/tch aft.htm [2000, April 20].

Bandaides and blackboards [Online] Available: http://funrsc.fairfield.edu/~jfleitas/contents.html [2000, April 20].

Keeping the Customers Satisfied: Implementing a Customer-focused, Performance-based Middle School Guidance and Counseling Program

Norma Y. Holder

As the world enters a new millennium, the roles and functions of school counselors in the state of Georgia are being shaped by the introduction of a document titled "A Framework for Asset Building Standards in a Guidance and Counseling Curriculum" (Georgia Department of Education, 1999). The document is a comprehensive developmental guidance model which has as its philosophy developing the internal and external assets of students. This model came into being as a result of the collaborative efforts of counselors, supervisors, and teachers across the state. Greater emphasis is now being placed on helping all students make appropriate career and educational choices, rather than only providing counseling for students who need assistance with personal and social problems which interfere with learning.

AN OVERVIEW OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

School counselors, as educators, are in the "business" of educating. Students are their primary customers. A fundamental goal of counselors should be to discover the needs of those customers. Once discovered, those needs must be addressed. Customers will evaluate the success of counselors in addressing those needs, and counselors will be held accountable for the results of their efforts.

Not only must counselors become more actively involved with all of the students in their charge, but also they must become more actively involved with parents, school personnel, and members of the community-at-large. Counselors must join forces with those individuals and focus on the common goal to ensure that all students experience growth, achievement, and success. The guidance and counseling program should not stand alone, but should be an integral part of the school's total educational program. Guidance counselors must become proactive trailblazers rather than reactive trail followers, and they must not hide their efforts. They must let the school community, as well as the larger community, know what they are doing. They must be aware of and exercise the principles of both good advertising and effective public relations.

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IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM

For eleven years the counselors at Lakeside Middle School in Evans, Georgia have worked together as a team. During that time, a guidance and counseling program that adheres to the directives and guidelines of the "Guidance Framework" (Georgia Department of Education, 1999) was created.

Several months before prospective students ("customers") set foot into the halls of Lakeside Middle School, we visit them as fifth-graders and introduce ourselves and our program to all of the students for whom we will soon be responsible. In addition to meeting the students, we provide avenues of communication with fifth-grade teachers and administrators in an effort to provide the smoothest, most seamless transition possible into middle school. Shortly after our meeting with the students, fifth-grade parents are invited to participate in an open house. During that forum, we introduce ourselves, our program, and our services to an expanded segment of the community, thus beginning advertising and public relations. During the first few weeks of the school year we meet with the same group of students we met the previous spring. This second meeting provides an additional opportunity to advertise our services to the "customers" for whom we will be responsible throughout the following three years.

Needs assessments are issued to all parents and students ("primary customers") and teachers ("secondary customers") early in the year (see Appendix A). The results of these needs assessments provide a blueprint for the formation of the school-based guidance and counseling plan, as well as for each counselor's individual plan, all of which are updated yearly. Historically, study skills education and career guidance are the top two identified needs, and we make certain that all students receive assistance in these areas.

Sixth grade students are provided with approximately eight classroom guidance sessions covering study skills. Some of the skills covered include organization, time management, listening, note-taking, test preparation, and test-taking. Each day, as part of the afternoon announcements, a study tip of the day is read for all of the students and staff to hear. We work closely with teachers who reinforce in the classroom what has been addressed in the guidance sessions. Individual students or small groups of students are referred, if necessary, for additional instruction on these topics.

Career guidance is a daily event at Lakeside Middle School. During homeroom sessions at the beginning of each day, the "career highlight" is presented over the intercom for all of the students and staff (see CX Bridges). During the morning highlight, a brief description of a career is given along with such data as salary, educational requirements, and opportunities for advancement. The students are advised of a career path at the high school level which would be suitable for the attainment of that particular career goal. We balance careers that would fit into both the college prep and technical career path, and the students are often amazed at the earning potential of some careers that may be attained through technical/vocational training. In addition, we set up a career center in the media center, providing an additional avenue of exploration for all students.

Each year, "customers" (students, parents, and teachers) are given opportunities to provide input into topics that are addressed in small-group settings. For the past two school years the topic of anger management was identified as the most pressing need. As a result of this information from the customers, we conducted six anger management groups for students. As part of the anger management curriculum, community resources were solicited to work with the students during selected sessions. A representative from the juvenile court spoke with the students about the consequences of not handling anger in appropriate ways. A

police officer who was assigned to the school on a daily basis spoke with the group members both formally and informally on various occasions. This law enforcer, who could easily have been perceived as the "enemy" by members of this particular group of students, became a valued member of the school team. Bonds between school and community were strengthened at the same time that student needs were addressed.

It is important to note that, at the conclusion of all classroom guidance and small group units, evaluation forms are given to students for them to provide feedback to the facilitators (see Appendices B and C). This feedback is used to refine programs and strategies and as a gauge of customer satisfaction.

COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

For the past several years the counselors have been actively involved in two school-based programs which although not technically under the umbrella of guidance and counseling, have, nevertheless, tied in nicely with its goals.

The first is the character commitment program, which did much in the past few years to turn the climate of a school in turmoil and upheaval into a school of purpose and serenity. This program was recognized on both the state and national levels. In 1996, Lakeside Middle School was awarded the "T.E.R.R.I.F.I.C. Award" by GEDA (Georgia Education Development Association) for outstanding achievement in character education. In 1997, the Georgia Association of Middle School Principals gave Lakeside Middle School principal William Morris the "Effective School Program Award" for his efforts in character education. Earlier this year the school was issued a "Promising Practices Citation" by the Character Education Partnership located in Washington, D.C. and the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character at Boston University.

As a core feature of the school's award-winning program, a particular character word is highlighted each month. The word, with its definition, is posted in many areas of the school and is announced over the intercom every morning. It is written in student plan books at the beginning of each week. It is discussed in classes and students are asked to write essays about it. The counselors emphasize the monthly character concept in individual counseling, group counseling, and classroom guidance efforts. At the end of each week, student council members choose several student essays focusing on the highlighted character concepts to be read to the student body during morning announcements. One anger management group maintains a showcase in the main lobby that exhibits student artistic and literary works that have one of our character concepts as a theme. The members of this group, as they work together on this project, have the opportunity to practice the character traits that they are showcasing. At the end of each nine weeks, those students who, in the opinion of their teachers, have consistently exhibited positive character traits for that period of time, are honored at a breakfast, and their parents are invited to be a part of that special occasion. Business resources in the community donate rewards (movie passes, tee shirts, etc.) to recognize the positive efforts of the students. This is collaboration at its best: school, home, and community working together to encourage and facilitate student growth and development.

The second complementary program is the wellness program, which was implemented four years ago. The program, which originates at the state level, is aimed primarily at the faculty and staff (secondary customers). A staff that is well physically, emotionally, and spiritually is better able to meet the needs of the students. The wellness captain at Lakeside Middle School advertises the program to colleagues, distributes a needs assessment to them (see Appendix D), and, with the assistance of a

wellness committee, formulates a plan that meets those identified needs. As one component of the wellness program, teachers are encouraged to use a portion of their planning time to participate in a walking program. Others participate in an after-school aerobics program led by one of the teachers who is involved in physical fitness.

Five guest speakers per year have addressed (gratis) the faculty on some of their previously identified topics of interest. Speakers have included a world-renowned expert on nutrition (who usually commands thousands of dollars per speaking engagement, and has volunteered his services on four occasions) and an award-winning ballroom dance instructor who has had our staff, with genuine joy reflected on their faces, doing the mambo, rumba, and tango. Parents of students or spouses of teachers who have heard of our program and wish to share their knowledge and expertise on such topics as diabetes, exercise, and humor in the workplace have also participated. It is expected that, as the staff's wellness quotient increases, they will be able to better deal effectively with the students. For three out of four years, Lakeside Middle School has been recognized by the Columbia County school system as having the most effective wellness program. Columbia County received similar recognition at the state level three times.

A FINAL STEP

It is not enough for counselors to implement effective curricula, programs, and strategies. The public must be made aware of what counselors are offering to their customers. Public relations is an essential component of a successful guidance and counseling program. Every nine weeks I write a column titled "From the Counselor's Corner" which is a part of the school's newsletter and has information specific to Lakeside Middle School's guidance department. This column gives me a chance to inform students, parents, and teachers of the efforts my colleague and I have been making during that time period, and what our future foci will be. After collaborating with my principal, I searched for and found an excellent "pre-packaged" publication aimed at parents of middle school students. This publication, Middle Years (Resources for Educators, Inc. 2000), meets our goals and objectives by providing parents with practical ideas that promote success, both on the part of the student and of the parent. It has been an effective means to regularly reach all of our primary customers. Parents are aware that this publication comes to them from our office because we are able to place our names and credentials in a prominent place on the newsletter. Parental feedback has been positive. The counselors maintain a guidance and counseling section on our school website. I also contact the local newspaper to advertise our successful programs and endeavors. In addition, for the past two years, we have presented information about our guidance and counseling program at the Georgia School Counselors' Association fall conference.

CONCLUSION

Keeping all of the customers satisfied seems to be a formidable goal, but once the customers' needs have been assessed, it is possible that counselors will discover that they are closer to that goal than they might think. Whatever the assessed need, formulate a plan to address that need. Implement the plan. Assess the effectiveness of your plan, and advertise the results of your efforts. Then sit back and watch those customers smile. They will be satisfied...and so will you!

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APPENDIX A

LAKESIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING
NEEDS ASSESSMENT 1999-2000

Ms. Holder and Ms. Marsh, Lakeside Middle School counselors, would appreciate your input as they design their program for the coming school year. Please check each statement that is important to you. You may check as many statements as you would like. Thank you for your help.

Please circle your current grade: 6 7 8 Please circle one: male female

As a student, I would like to know how to:

- ❒ 1. Solve problems and make good decisions.
- ❒ 2. Improve my study skills and test-taking skills.
- ❒ 3. Set goals for myself and carry them out.
- ❒ 4. Explore future career choices.
- ❒ 5. Obtain information about educational options after high school.
- ❒ 6. Manage my time better.
- ❒ 7. Resolve conflict with others.
- ❒ 8. Cope with pressure from school, home, friends, and myself.
- ❒ 9. Better understand my abilities, interests, and aptitudes.
- ❒ 10. Ask for what I want in an appropriate and assertive manner.
- ❒ 11. Get along with others (teachers, parents, siblings, friends).
- ❒ 12. Be more comfortable about speaking up in class.
- ❒ 13. Better understand people who are different.
- ❒ 14. Become less shy and nervous around others.
- ❒ 15. Make friends more easily.
- ❒ 16. Control my anger.
- ❒ 17. Cope with a divorce and/or a blended family.
- ❒ 18. Cope with the death of a loved one.

I would be most comfortable dealing with my problems and concerns through:

- ❒ individual, counseling sessions
- ❒ small group counseling sessions
- ❒ classroom guidance sessions

Comments: _____

_____

APPENDIX B

LAKESIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL EVALUATION OF GROUP ACTIVITIES
ANGER MANAGEMENT 1999-2000

Name (optional)_____Group_____

1. I liked this group (a) not at all; (b) a little; (c) a medium amount; (d) a lot.

2. I feel that I can now deal with my anger in more positive ways (a) not at all; (b) a little; (c) a medium amount; (d) a lot.

3. The time spent in our group was helpful (a) not at all; (b) a little; (c) a medium amount; (d) a lot.

4. Since being in the group, my behavior at school has changed (a) not at all; (b) a little; (c) a medium amount; (d) a lot.

5. Since being in the group, my behavior at home has changed (a) not at all; (b) a little; (c) a medium amount; (d) a lot.

6. The things I liked most about the group were _____

_____

_____

_____

7. The things I liked least about the group were_____

_____

_____

_____

8. I was happy with the way the counselor led the group (a) not at all; (b) a little; (c) a medium amount; (d) a lot.

9. Other comments _____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

LAKESIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT EVALUATION OF
CLASSROOM GUIDANCE UNIT STUDY SKILLS 1999-2000

Name (optional)_____Period_____

1. These sessions helped me (a) not at all; (b) a little; (c) a medium amount; (d) a lot.

2. I have changed my study habits as a result of these sessions ❒ yes ❒ no
   If you circled "yes", please indicate the changes you have made:

   _____

   _____

3. The thing(s) I liked best about these sessions was (were):

   _____

   _____

5. I did not like:

   _____

   _____

6. Additional comments:

   _____

   _____

APPENDIX D

LAKESIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL
WELLNESS SURVEY 1999-2000

Please complete the following survey (which is a part of the county's wellness directive) and return it to Norma Holder by September 18, 1999. As always, your efforts are appreciated!

1. I would be interested in attending a wellness session on the topic(s) of:

   _____

   _____

2. I would be interested in participating in the following fitness programs at school:

   ❒ aerobics (after school) ❒ walking (after school) ❒ walking (during planning)

3. I would be interested in participating in a weight loss contest based on a percentage of weight lost.

   ❒ yes ❒ no

4. I would participate in free health screenings, if they were available.

   ❒ yes ❒ no

5. I would be interested in participating in a wellness-fest, which would emphasize foods with good taste as well as good nutritional value.

   ❒ yes ❒ no

6. I would be willing to contribute at least one wellness article, idea, etc. to be used in the dissemination of wellness information to our faculty and staff.

   ❒ yes ❒ no

7. I would be willing to be a member of the school's wellness committee.

   ❒ yes ❒ no

Additional comments_____

_____

_____

The School Counselor's Response to the Indirect Exposure of Children to Violence and Natural Disaster

Dana Edwards

"...kindness is the connection that links us all together and strengthens the bonds within our communities, neighborhoods, and families" (Carter, as cited in The Editors of Conari Press, 1994, p.13).

The 1992 Hurricane Andrew disaster in south Florida, the devastating flooding in 1994 in south Georgia, the carnage of the war in Bosnia, the bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, the 1996 bombing in the Olympic Centennial Park in Atlanta, the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, and the shootings at schools in Mississippi, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Colorado are only a sample of the natural disasters, wars, and acts of violence and terrorism that affect children in deep and lasting ways. Also, almost daily, children hear media reports of children murdered by other children, or even by their own parents. It is highly probable that the children who are victims of such horrendous events suffer physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Much has been written about how disasters and violence affect children who directly experience trauma and possible treatment plans (Carter, 1987; Dollinger, O'Donnell, & Stanley, 1984; Hickson, 1992, Joyner, 1991; Osofsky & Osofsky, 1998; Rigamer, 1986; Ursano & Fullerton, 1990; and Vogel & Vernberg, 1992). How and to what extent other children who are not victims, but who witness these events via television and other forms of communication, are affected is unknown. Miller (1997) writes that while children who are victims of violence experience a host of negative emotions and behaviors, "children who simply hear about violence also evidence symptoms of distress" (p.5). Many children have a sense that, if these types of disasters can happen to strangers, they can just as easily happen to them. Additionally, after seeing the destruction from a natural disaster or violent event on television, many children may become fearful. Sustained fear can lead to powerlessness.

Many adults and children remember the images of the devastation of the bombing of the Oklahoma Federal Building and the almost constant televised coverage of the school shootings in Littleton. With the growing media coverage of events such as these on television, school counselors must become attuned to look for signs of fear, anxiety, and coping problems in children and implement plans to assist them.

CHILDREN'S REACTIONS

There is no question that children who are directly exposed to violent events are

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affected the most. Examples of reactions by these children are anxious confusion, fear, sadness, shock, and loss (of people, pets, and possessions). Reactions may also include uncertainty about the future, regressive behaviors such as thumb sucking and bed wetting, a "shattering of their illusion of parental control" (Shelby & Tredinnick, 1995, p. 493), trouble getting to sleep, nightmares, withdrawal from or increased dependency on others, and intense or "phobic" fear of storms. Often these reactions are recognized immediately as normal responses to trauma and crisis teams are put in place to help deal with the myriad of reactions.

There are several frequently discussed therapeutic approaches to help children cope with reactions to violence. The most common therapeutic techniques are to help children make sense of the event, or assist in the "assimilation of the traumatic event into the child's understanding of his or her present situation" (Garbarino, Kostelny, & Dubrow, 1991, p.377), and to reassure children that they are safe again (Garbarino et al.). Play therapy techniques are also recommended (Shelby & Tredinnick, 1995).

Although many children who see the aftermath of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane, tornado, or flooding, or who see the violence produced by wars or school shootings are momentarily affected, they often have the coping resources that protect against strong reactions. Other, more vulnerable, children who are indirectly exposed to catastrophic or violent acts can show similar reactions to those of children who are the actual victims of such events. Unfortunately, in the case of indirect exposure, the reactions may be puzzling to adults and, thus, help for these children may not be immediate or even available.

Not only can children react emotionally from watching stressful events on television, but also they may begin to assume that violence is a natural course of action to solving problems.

> Whether or not children learn about violence from direct experience, they see an overwhelming amount in the news media. News stories show that people do horrendous things to each other, that they solve their problems with violence, and that world leaders and governments resolve international conflicts through violence. (Levin, 1994, p. 12)

Children, especially young children, do not have the cognitive skills to sort out the different messages that are given (Levin, 1994). In other words, it is difficult for children to understand that problems and situations can be solved peacefully when they see them solved through violence. School counselors can and should talk about nonviolent approaches to problems using conflict resolution strategies, empathy training, and anger management techniques. But because children learn best by doing, the school counselor must provide the opportunity for children to practice these skills.

THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S RESPONSES

The plan of action that can follow the televised destruction from a natural disaster or violent event may best be handled through classroom guidance lessons led by the counselor and by the classroom teacher. The guidance lessons should include: (1) explaining the event in developmentally appropriate terms; (2) allowing time for students to share their feelings and discuss how the actual victims might feel; (3) explaining that the vast majority of people want to do good, not harm (in the event of terrorism); and (4) asking the students if they would like to respond by drawing pictures, writing letters, or donating needed items or money. Students who show symptoms of trauma could receive short-term (perhaps even one session) small group or individual counseling or could be referred to an outside

agency.

Processing the events that have occurred with the children and discussing their feelings is a natural, appropriate, and almost automatic response of the school counselor. It has been the author's experience, however, that most children want more than processing. They long for assurance that such devastating events will not happen to them. Guarantees of this nature are not possible, but it is essential that counselors give what assurances they can.

As difficult as are these times of crisis, it is fortunate that in the midst of the worst disasters, both natural and manmade, the human spirit is not broken. People bond together to lend hands, listening ears, supplies, and money. Heroes of all sorts do what must be done to help others. When the worst acts of violence, such as terrorism and genocide, demonstrate a sad commentary on the state of our world, we also thankfully observe great acts of benevolence that somehow restore our hope in humanity. The school counselor should discuss these great acts of kindness, charity, and concern that inevitably result in times of crises, as well as provide an opportunity for students to participate in such acts. Children can find comfort in knowing that positive actions can come out of devastation and that, if they were personally involved in a disaster, others would be there to offer assistance to them.

One way the school counselor can encourage a climate of kindness and caring is through the use of children's literature. This strategy should be utilized as a normal part of the school day, not simply as a result of a traumatic event. By reading books with empathetic characters, children can witness models of caring and discuss what it means to be helpful. Also, books that discuss children who have experienced problems and have found the strength to address them are excellent resources for class and group discussion. Lamme and McKinley (1992) provide examples of appropriate books that encourage caring behavior.

The counselor can stimulate a sense of power in children who are vicariously touched by devastating acts of nature and violence by allowing them to make decisions about how to help the actual victims. According to Robinson and Rotter (1991), children who are allowed to make decisions learn they have some control over their lives. This feeling of control, or sense of power, is essential for healthy coping. The school counselor can ask students how they would like to help. In the case of natural disasters, students may decide to organize a schoolwide effort to donate and collect food, water, diapers, cleaning supplies, clothes, school supplies, and toys. Students may also choose to write letters and draw pictures that can be sent to the children and families affected by the disaster. Monetary donations are also appropriate; however, the experience of helping is magnified when children themselves shop for needed items. By helping others, the negative feelings and reactions that result from times of crisis can be alleviated. Also, these helpful activities that utilize interpersonal skills provide opportunities for children to highlight their strengths and increase their feelings of self-worth. This, in turn, helps children build their repertoire of coping resources (Robinson & Rotter, 1991). Following are two examples that demonstrate how school counselors can respond to assist students who indirectly witness catastrophic events.

Example 1. Adam, a second-grade student, began having nightmares after he saw on television the devastation in Florida from Hurricane Andrew. If a thunderstorm occurred during school, he would immediately become anxious and ask to go home. He was fearful that such a tragedy would happen to him and his family. Initially, the school counselor assured Adam that it was unlikely that he would experience the effects of a hurricane due to his geographical location. This did not, however, seem to ease his anxiety. After further examining his fears,

the school counselor understood that Adam felt completely powerless should a situation like this arise. Perhaps for the first time, Adam realized that there are some things in life over which no one, including his parents, had any control.

The school counselor invited the meteorologist of a local television station to speak to Adam's class about the wonders of weather. This seemed to help lessen some of Adam's anxiety in the classroom, but did not ease his sleeping difficulties. With the help of the counselor, Adam's class organized a school-wide effort to collect needed items to send to the victims of the hurricane. A semi-trailer truck loaded with cleaning supplies, bottled water, diapers, food, school supplies, and other items was sent to south Florida. This effort to instill some measure of power and control over events proved to Adam that he was not helpless, but was very powerful, as were others in the school. This activity appeared to be the turning point in helping him cope with his fears.

Example 2. The innocent victims of the Bosnian war were constantly shown on the nightly news, and many children wondered why the killing was happening. Each night viewers saw townspeople scurrying to their homes amid sniper bullets. This was truly troubling to children and adults alike.

With the help of a Bosnian woman who had recently moved to America, the school counselor was able to connect with a refugee camp housing Bosnian children, women, and elderly adults who had fled to Croatia. Four schools were interested in supporting an effort to help these people. The Bosnian-American woman spoke to the children, explaining in age-appropriate ways the reason for the devastating war, which could best be explained as the intolerance of a people of a different religion and culture. Three of the schools collected and donated used clothes, coats, and toys, and purchased new school and art supplies. One school, located in an area of the city where the average family income is well below the poverty level, contributed by sending letters and drawings to the children in the refugee camp. This particular school had not previously been asked to contribute to any kind of charitable effort. The children in this school seemed to be always on the receiving end of support rather than on the giving end. These children in particular were excited to participate.

Several months after the people in the refugee camp received the letters and other items, pen pal relationships were formed by many of the Bosnian and Georgian students. Some high school students who had recently relocated to America from Bosnia assisted by translating the letters. All the participants felt a true appreciation for what it means to need and give help. Interestingly, the next year, two children from the refugee camp relocated near these schools. The counselor arranged for one of the Bosnian children to visit classrooms to meet those who had helped. The Bosnian girl, in her best English, thanked the students for coming to the aid of those in her refugee camp. This message was extremely powerful because the school children learned that their efforts made a difference in the lives of others. The following are excepts from letters written by Bosnian children in the refugee camp:

> "Dear Tanya,
>
> I received your letter that really made me feel greater than ever. My name is Aldina. My mother's name is Suada and my father's name is Rectep. My mother is not here and my father is in Bosnia. I live with my grandfather and grandmother. My grandfather is 71 and my grandmother is 72 years old. My family says hi to you.
>
> Bye!
> Aldina

Dear Jack,

Merry Christmas! I hope nothing bad happens to you. Please be careful. I like to ride a skateboard. I love you.

Aljukic

Dear Friend,

I received your letter and it was a great pleasure for me. My name is Fatima. I am nine years old. I live with my mother. I have a grandmother and grandfather but they are sick and can't walk anymore. I am glad now because I have a friend who writes me.

Your friend,
Fatima"

CONCLUSION

Adults must understand that children can be affected by the indirect exposure to violence and natural disaster. For some students the effects are temporary; for others, they are more enduring. In either case, the school counselor can offer assistance. Since humans have inhabited this planet, crises such as those previously mentioned have occurred. Unfortunately, violence and destruction appear to be inevitable. It is prudent that the school counselor have a plan for healing in such times.

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Project IMPROVE: Helping Students Feel Safe in the School Cafeteria and on the School Buses

Sheila W. Veatch

The purpose of Project IMPROVE is to create a more positive learning environment by increasing students' sense of emotional and physical safety in the school cafeteria and on the school buses. This is achieved through teaching manners and social skills for 6 weeks in all grade levels with monthly follow-ups, implementing a Restaurant Program for the school cafeteria, a Ride Attendant Program on the school buses, and involving all students in community service/service learning projects during the year.

The results of the program at Vaughan Elementary in Cobb County where the program was developed were excellent overall. The school cafeteria became quieter, more orderly, cleaner and safer. On-task behavior of students returning from lunch improved. Students were calmer and more ready to return to academics due to the more positive lunchroom environment. Students had more pleasant bus ride experiences, leading to an increase in students riding the bus regularly. Bus drivers spent more of their time on actual driving because of the help received from the Rocketeers onboard. Student behavior improved in untargeted areas of the school environment such as in the hallways and bathrooms. Other benefits were that custodians spent less time picking up trash and cleaning up spills, and more time attending to other duties around the school. This project united staff, administrators, community and parents to help students and improve school climate.

Pre and post data were collected and analyzed for grades two and five (see Tables 1 and 2). Lunchroom manners (grades two and five) and feelings of safety in the lunchroom (grade five) showed significant increases in all measured objectives. Students reported increases in attempts to try to ignore someone when he or she is mean to them. They also reported an increase in the use of humor to try to defuse a possible confrontation.

Students reported increased attempts to try to talk it out with a bully when they see a bully being mean to someone else, and they have made friends on a more frequent basis with the child who is being hurt. Significant improvement in bus manners and behavior for both grades was documented. Finally, students in the second and fifth grades indicated an increase in awareness of and involvement in helping others through community service projects.

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TABLE 1. SECOND GRADE RESULTS OF PAIRED *t*-TEST ANALYSIS

	n	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Objective 1					
Lunchroom Manners	139				
pretest		3.67	.72	-17.46	.01*
posttest		4.50	.50		
Objective 2					
Safe in Lunchroom	136				
pretest		4.34	.98	-.48	.63
posttest		4.39	.86		
Objective 3					
Bus Manners	107				
pretest		4.03	.81	-10.82	.01*
posttest		4.65	.43		
Objective 4					
Safe on Bus	133				
pretest		4.43	.85	-1.03	.31
posttest		4.52	.71		
Objective 5					
Helping Others	133				
pretest		3.22	.44	-11.82	<.01*
posttest		3.73	.32		

*p<.05

TABLE 2. FIFTH GRADE RESULTS OF PAIRED *t*-TEST ANALYSIS

	n	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
Objective 1					
Lunchroom Manners	91				
pretest		3.71	.70	-6.37	<.01*
posttest		3.98	.71		
Objective 2					
Safe in Lunchroom	102				
pretest		4.54	.69	-2.87	<.01*
posttest		4.76	.49		
Objective 3					
Bus Manners	90				
pretest		3.60	.78	-5.46	<.01*
posttest		3.82	.87		
Objective 4					
Safe on Bus	101				
pretest		4.56	.64	-1.12	.26
posttest		4.64	.52		
Objective 5					
Helping Others	102				
pretest		3.26	.35	-2.99	<.01*
posttest		3.39	.42		

*p<.05

Project IMPROVE is a Georgia Department of Education Innovation Program validated project. It is offered along with about 18 other innovation projects for schools or school systems to adopt (with or without a grant of up to $5,000.00) and implement in their schools. Innovation grants are available one per school system each school year. Adopters receive an implementation manual (which includes lesson plans, timelines, resource and materials lists), a half-day training session, and on-going support. Information about how to apply for an Innovation Grant is available at the end of this article.

Project IMPROVE has three main components: 1) manners/social skills training and creating a restaurant in the school cafeteria, 2) bus ridership and formation of a ride attendant program and 3) service learning and community service.

MANNERS/SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING AND CREATING A RESTAURANT

Most students have learned how to behave when eating at a restaurant. This behavior does not always generalize to the school cafeteria. Creating a restaurant atmosphere in the school cafeteria helps students realize the importance of manners and social skills in the school setting. It helps students treat each other more respectfully when not under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher. The restaurant environment provides the school with a central hub where students can enjoy a meal and socialize with their friends, yet return to the classrooms calmer and ready to resume learning.

A core committee plans the design, layout, and decoration of the new "restaurant". Student, parent, administrator, teacher, custodian and cafeteria worker input is gathered before any final decisions are made. Once a theme has been decided upon, a name for the restaurant is selected. Student interest is piqued by intercom announcements and skits about the new restaurant "under construction", and a Grand Opening date is announced. A theme is developed using the school's mascot. The cafeteria was named the "Hard Rocket Cafe" in the program's pilot site. Decorating was accomplished by using the rocket mascot and outer space motifs on the cafeteria walls, on the tables, and in the promotional materials. Layout changes were made to make the space in the cafeteria more inviting and less institutional. One layout is to arrange tables in a U-shape, leaving open space in the center for special event or guest tables. Leaving spaces between eating areas dissipates sound as well.

Six weeks of manners/social skills lessons begin in each classroom. The first lesson is about Restaurant Expectations. These are specific behaviors that are expected of each student as he/she enters, moves through and leaves the restaurant. After this lesson, each class visits the restaurant to learn where the class will sit, how to pick up the school lunch and utensils, where to take empty trays and other information. This run-through is vital to establishing a sense of order in the new restaurant. Daily instructional follow-ups of five to ten minutes take place during the first two weeks to reinforce learning. Other manners lessons include table setting and etiquette, proper table conversation, invitation and thank-you note writing, making introductions and telephone manners. Social skills lessons include dealing with teasing, handling a bully, using "I" messages, and assertiveness. Each school should decide on topics relative to their population.

The use of music to enhance the restaurant theme is helpful, and fun for students and staff. Classical music is a good

choice, but contemporary instrumental music or popular music can be used effectively as well. Good manners and behavior incentives help keep students on track. Examples are using award coupons, give-aways (donations from local companies) and whole-class recognition at "celebrity tables".

All staff involved in monitoring student behavior should be trained prior to implementing the program. The atmosphere should be positive and encouraging, with minimum emphasis on scolding or punishing. Consistency and fairness in dealing with students are paramount, although there must be consequences for misbehavior. Consequences are developed by the core committee and carried out in the restaurant or through the classroom.

At the end of the six weeks of lessons, each class or grade level has a celebration. If the program is implemented at the beginning of a school year, celebrations can easily be incorporated into traditional annual holiday celebrations such as Thanksgiving. Thereafter, monthly refresher lessons will carry the learning through to the end of the school year.

BUS RIDERSHIP/RIDE ATTENDANT PROGRAM

The first step in implementing this component of Project IMPROVE is a meeting with the bus drivers who will be involved and, if possible, the district Transportation Director. At this meeting discuss the workings of the program, gather ideas and work through possible obstacles such as bus driver fears or hesitancy. Some training should take place on how to greet students as they board and deboard, clarification of student management procedures, assignment of seats for passengers and information about Ride Attendants. Let bus drivers know that the program will be flexible, feedback will be gathered often and changes made as necessary. Stress that the bus driver is solely responsible for student safety on the bus, and that Ride Attendants will be public relations assistants for younger students on the bus.

All students are taught a lesson about responsible bus ridership at the beginning of the school year. Expectations are discussed and role-plays are conducted. The Ride Attendant program is introduced so that students are aware of the job description and duties of the Ride Attendants on their buses. Duties include helping younger students find their seats, helping students with heavy items, solving minor disagreements, reporting bigger issues to the bus driver, opening and closing bus windows, reminding students to stay seated while the bus is in motion and to take their belongings when they leave, watching to assure that students are clear of the bus after drop-off at a bus stop and keeping students calm when challenges such as a breakdown occur.

Staff and parents are given an orientation about the program as well. Then selection and training of Ride Attendants take place. Any student who rides the bus on a regular basis may apply, regardless of academic or behavior standing. Often, the worst behaved student becomes a model passenger with the responsibility and authority of being a Ride Attendant. Airline flight attendants are a wonderful resource to help with the training, which takes place on two consecutive days in one-hour sessions. After Ride Attendants begin their term of service, they meet every two weeks with the Ride Attendant sponsor for on-going support. A celebration with their bus drivers at a certificate ceremony takes place at the end of their term of service. The Project IMPROVE Implementation Manual has all the necessary forms, letters, and student training manuals for this program.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

The last component of Project IMPROVE is helping students, staff and parents become more aware of the importance of helping the needy in their local community. A lesson about community service is taught in each classroom. Then the school selects a project that involves everyone. One idea is a "Make A Difference Day".

Parents are asked to send in particular items needed by local foster care, senior citizens, as well as by cancer and AIDS patient organizations. A large area in the school (e.g., the gym or cafeteria) is reserved. Grade levels rotate into the area throughout the day to do such things as make cards for senior citizens, decorate lunch bags and make sandwiches for homeless shelters, and fill bags with donated items. Students and parents help deliver the completed items to the various organizations. Each school should determine the areas of need in their local community.

At year-end, school climate is better because of Project IMPROVE. Students are more respectful, use better manners, and are less aggressive toward their peers. The school cafeteria becomes a more pleasant place to have lunch. Bus ridership increases, as does the enjoyment of students riding the bus. Staff, students, and parents are more aware of how they can make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate in their local community.

If you are interested in Project IMPROVE or finding out about the other Innovation Programs and grants, contact Sheila Veatch, Project Director at 770-528-4232, Barbara Rous, Innovation Program Center, 606 Harris Street, Dalton, GA 30721, 706-595-9742 or Lynne Entrekin, Innovation Program Center, Thomson, GA 30824, 706-226-6369.

Peer Mediation in an Alternative School

Jacqueline J. Carver

Few school counselors were surprised at the news that fighting, violence, and gangs have been found in opinion polls to be tied with a lack of discipline as the biggest problem confronting American public schools (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). The grim reality of the situation is reflected in the exceptional growth in the field of school conflict resolution – from a few pilot programs in the United States to a recognized field of research and implementation. Among the experts in the field, many agree that the best approach to safety in our schools comes from teaching young people how to resolve their conflicts peaceably through a method known as peer mediation (Peart, 1994). According to the National Association of Mediation in Education, more than 5,000 schools in the U.S. now have some kind of peer mediation or conflict resolution program in place (Opffer, 1997). "Peer mediation has become one of the most widely used conflict resolution procedures" (Donahue, 1996, p. 16).

In deciding what type of peer mediation program to implement in their schools, counselors have three primary models from which to choose. According to Johnson, Johnson, Dudley & Acikgoz (1994), the most effective peer mediation program is the total school model. With this model all students are taught conflict resolution principles, and all can function as peer mediators. The only drawback is that this method takes a considerable amount of time in large schools with numerous classrooms and students. And, they concede, it is more difficult to implement, operate, and monitor (Lupton-Smith, Carruthers, Flythe, Goettee, & Modest, 1996).

Graham and Cline (1989), favor a mini course on mediation that is taught as part of a larger subject class such as social studies. In this model, a ready-made forum is easily established to deal smoothly with the operations of mediation. A major drawback of this model is the lack of diversity of the peer mediators due to the limited number of students who enroll in the course.

The third model, the student club model, selects students from the entire student population and brings them together outside of the regular school curriculum. Even though it provides for the most diversity and the most student involvement, this method tends to significantly cut into the depth of training and frequency of support for the mediators that might otherwise be available (Lupton-Smith et al., 1996).

As with any program that requires time, money, and accommodations, the general public demands justification and accountability of peer mediation programs. Fortunately, a growing body of research conducted by outside evaluators is beginning to provide evidence for the claims of peer mediation proponents (Opffer, 1997).

One of the biggest benefits of the peer mediation program seems to be that students have a neutral ground on which to

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discuss individual conflicts and resolve problems. Also, non-mediators learn that there is a venue for solving conflicts (Opffer, 1997). School administrators seem especially to like the program as they report that it reduces discipline problems in their schools. Teachers, parents and students indicate that the mediators appear to transfer their learned skills to home and neighborhood and learn to handle conflicts on their own. This strength, combined with the recognition given these students, is perceived to result in enhanced self-esteem. "Most students emerge from mediation with greater self-respect" (Peart, 1994, p. 17).

Despite the popularity of peer mediation programs, the claims of effectiveness by advocates are largely untested. One problem is that reliable data on the nature of conflicts in schools is lacking. Studies have shown that common types of student conflict range from verbal harassment and arguments to physical fights and dating and relationship issues.

Existing research supports the conclusion that untrained students tend to deal with conflict through withdrawal and suppression or through aggression and coercion, while students who have been trained in conflict resolution or peer mediation tend to use integrative negotiation and mediation procedures (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). These students also appear to retain the knowledge months after formal training has ended, to transfer that knowledge to non-classroom and non-school situations and to apply integrative negotiation and mediation procedures to conflict situations even when placed in a situation where either a cooperative approach or a competitive approach could be used. These students' psychological health and self-esteem tend to increase, while discipline problems and suspensions tend to decrease.

Although there is a current lack of quantitative data on the effectiveness of conflict resolution and peer mediation programs, there are certain pluses about which there is no dispute. Conflicts among students occur frequently in schools, and untrained students tend to use conflict strategies that create destructive outcomes. Conflict resolution and peer mediation programs seem to be effective in teaching students integrative negotiation and mediation procedures that students continue to use after the training is concluded. The training results are generally constructive resolutions with a reduction in the numbers of student-student conflicts referred to teachers and administrators. One practical effect is the reduction in the number of suspensions and lost instructional time (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). Although there is a long way to go, Carruthers, Sweeney, Kmitta, and Harris (1996) state that even though research and evaluation efforts in school settings cannot be as well controlled as one would like, this should not dissuade school practitioners from evaluating their conflict resolution and peer mediation programs. Training in this area clearly appears to be an effective way of constructively managing conflict in schools.

PROCEDURE

The type of peer mediation program that best fit our Alternative High School/Middle School of about 100 students was a combination of the "whole school" and the "club" type.

Orientation and Recruitment

A faculty meeting was used to provide orientation to the teachers and staff about the program and to ask the teachers for their input. Our school has ten faculty members and it was easy to get support and consensus on the basics of the program. The majority of teachers had come from schools that had peer mediation programs so they were familiar with the concepts.

Because our school has only one counselor, it was decided that the counselor was the logical person to go into each of the five homerooms. The faculty also decided to combine the fifth homeroom with the sixth

because they were both small. Input from the faculty also determined that the counselor would go into the homerooms for one 50-minute period a day to provide orientation and recruitment. Because all of our students are considered to be at risk for dropping out of school, we wanted to be certain that they knew that they were *all* being encouraged to participate and not just the best behaved or the students with the highest grades. At the same time all students were given an overview of the program and how it was to work, as well as how to avail themselves of the services. Questions were entertained to be certain the students had a clear conception of the program.

Application and Selection

The counselor interviewed all 30 applicants, with each interview lasting from 5 to 7 minutes on the average. The selection was made on a first-come, first-served basis with the first 15 qualified students selected. Care was taken to choose representatives of a cross-section of the entire school population in terms of sex, race, ethnicity and neighborhood. In addition, our selection process emphasized good communication skills, leadership ability, maturity, assertiveness, respect of and for peers, and most importantly, the ability to keep confidentiality.

Training

The 15 candidates attended training classes for one 50-minute class period a day over a two-week span of time. The last class at the end of each week was extended for two class periods to bring the total number of training hours to twelve. The curriculum consisted of the following components: (a) the role and qualities of peer mediators; (b) understanding the nature of conflicts; (c) communication skills; (d) steps in peer mediating; and (e) practice in all of the above. The students decided they would like to use the co-mediator style.

Program Implementation

While the student mediators were in training, a prominent bulletin board was used to display their names and pictures. On the last day of training the mediators voted on a catchy name for the group, "The Peace Posse", which was then added to the bulletin board. A labeled folder was constructed to hang on the board to hold the applications for mediation.

When a request for mediation came in, it was decided that because our school is virtually un-graded, the counselor would choose the students to make up the pair that would conduct the session. That way, friends would not be involved in mediating friends. Every effort was made to mediate cases on the same day that they were submitted. Those submitted after sixth period were done the following day unless it was deemed an emergency. Most mediation sessions were expected to last 15-20 minutes unless there was a problem mediating a solution. The student mediators themselves are in charge of scheduling the sessions, arranging the room, getting the participants, and doing the required paperwork at the end of each session. The counselor and/or a trained para-professional is in charge of each mediation and is always nearby to help if needed, but they do not sit in on the actual mediation process. Once a month, the counselor meets with the peer mediators to find out how they are feeling about the program, answer questions, let them share concerns or ideas with each other, and evaluate the need for further training.

Methods of Evaluation

The 15 peer mediator candidates were given a pre- and post-program Student Assessment that consisted of two sets of questions. The first set asked students to indicate how they thought school staff should respond to conflict in the school or classroom, using a scale ranging from always to never. The second set of questions asked the students to indicate how much

they agreed or disagreed with a specific statement. A paired samples T-test was then conducted using the students' pre- and post-program scores.

Results

On a number of questions the response on the post-test differed significantly from that on the pre-test. After undergoing peer mediation training, students who previously felt that teachers should *always* or *usually* "smooth over" situations, favored this approach only some of the time. Students who had almost universally favored mandatory apology as an essential component of dispute resolution, saw apology as helpful but not absolutely necessary after they had received peer mediation training.

Perhaps the most dramatic shift occurred in attitudes toward settling a dispute after training and the use of peer mediation. Prior to peer training, the overwhelming majority of students felt that it was *sometimes* appropriate for teachers to tell students to settle a dispute after class and only *sometimes* or *never* appropriate to refer students to peer mediation. After training, students felt that it was *never* appropriate for a teacher to tell students to settle a dispute after class. These same students felt that disputes should *always* be referred to peer mediation.

The second set of questions which related to attitudes toward and the understanding of conflict asked students to agree or disagree with statements such as "Conflicts among students have no place in the school," and, "Avoiding conflicts helps students build productive relationships". As with the first set of questions, the response to this second set revealed a dramatic shift in attitude and understanding after the students were trained in peer mediation techniques.

The response to the statements "In a dispute, there is typically a student who is right and a student who is wrong" and "Avoiding conflict helps students build productive relationships" showed the most profound change. Almost unanimously, students who felt that there was always a "right" and a "wrong" student, and that conflict avoidance was productive prior to receiving peer mediation training, took the diametrically opposite view after having been trained.

DISCUSSION

Clearly, the training resulted in an attitudinal shift among the participants. Their approach to conflict resolution shifted from a competitive/individualistic style to a more cooperative/constructive style. Anecdotal evidence provided by administrators indicated a decrease in the number and type of disciplinary referrals over the course of the current school year. In addition, similar anecdotal evidence received from teachers indicated an awareness of the peer mediation program and an interest in participating in the program (both formally and informally) among the student body as a whole.

Because the peer mediation program at our particular school is still in the implementation phase, it is too soon to draw definitive conclusions regarding its effectiveness. Such conclusions would be appropriate only on the basis of reliable data derived from a properly designed and conducted study. However, based on the results cited above, the utilization of a peer mediation program appears to hold promise as an effective and efficient method of dealing with a wide variety of student conflict in this alternative school setting.

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GSCEPs: Georgia School Counselors Effective Practices

Dana Edwards, *Column Editor*

The purpose of the GSCEP column is to share innovative ideas and programs from practicing school counselors. In this issue, we have included ideas on needs assessment, program evaluation, student involvement, career exploration, and mentoring.

In order to accurately and adequately design a counseling program, school counselors must seek input from administrators, students, teachers, and parents. In doing so, the needs of those who directly benefit from counseling services drive the program. One of the best ways to do this is with a needs assessment. The needs assessment can be given at the beginning of each school year or right at the end of the school year so planning can occur over the summer. The needs assessment included in this column is very comprehensive and with the proper amount of encouragement by the counselors to get them back, this information can be quite helpful.

There is an increasing demand for accountability for school counselors. This demand is often best met by evaluating school counseling programs and then reporting those results. Although most counselors desire to evaluate their programs, the amount of time needed to do so makes this a daunting task. To make at least one part of this responsibility easier, GSCEP is including five evaluations from various programs. A parent and student elementary Changing Families small counseling group, a high school study skills small counseling group, and teacher and student mentoring program evaluation are included. Although each evaluation was tailor made by the school counselor to evaluate their specific program, others can use them to evaluate similar programs or adapt them as the program and level of students necessitates. These can be used as a pre- and post-test or post-test only evaluation.

Next, there is a paragraph from a mentoring handbook explaining confidentiality and its importance to new community mentors. These two counselors have done an excellent job of doing this and it can be extremely helpful to counselors developing mentor handbooks or training programs. Also included is a brief description of a unique program designed by the school counselor and students at Etowah High School to encourage student involvement. Lastly, there is a scavenger hunt activity which can be used when students are using GCIS (Georgia Computer Information System) to engage in career exploration.

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SCHOOLWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

by Elaine Coyle, Marist School and Shannon Cone, Riverwood High School, Fulton County

STUDENT FORM

(teachers and parents can be assessed by slightly varying this form)

The counselors would like your help determining what types of groups and activities to offer this year. Under each heading, place a check mark next to the topic(s) that you are interested in.

Decision making

- ❒ 1. Solving problems and making good decisions.
- ❒ 2. Setting goals for myself and carrying them out.
- ❒ 3. Managing my time better.
- ❒ 4. Other:_____

Peer Pressure

- ❒ 5. Coping with pressures from friends.
- ❒ 6. Resisting drugs and alcohol.
- ❒ 7. Stealing and other unlawful acts.
- ❒ 8. Cheating
- ❒ 9. Other:_____

Self Esteem/Acceptance of Self

- ❒ 10. Better understanding my abilities and interests.
- ❒ 11. Asking for what I want in an acceptable and assertive manner.
- ❒ 12. Accepting criticism better.
- ❒ 13. Becoming less shy and nervous about others.
- ❒ 14. Being more comfortable about speaking up in class.
- ❒ 15. Better understanding myself.
- ❒ 16. Accepting my body.
- ❒ 17. Dealing with sadness/depression.
- ❒ 18. Other:_____

Relationships

- ❒ 19. Resolving conflicts with others.
- ❒ 20. Coping with pressures from parents.
- ❒ 21. Knowing the consequences of a dating relationship.
- ❒ 22. Better understanding people who are different from me.
- ❒ 23. Learning how to make friends.
- ❒ 24. Other:_____

Academic Concerns

- ❒ 25. Improving my study skills and test taking skills.
- ❒ 26. Exploring future career choices.
- ❒ 27. Selecting the most appropriate courses in school.
- ❒ 28. Getting information about educational options after high school.
- ❒ 29. Choosing the right college and learning about financial aid options.
- ❒ 30. Coping with pressures from school, teachers, and administrators.
- ❒ 31. Other:_____

Out of the topics listed, select the five that are the most interesting to you. Rank these topics in order of importance and write the corresponding numbers in the spaces below.

- ❒ Most important _____
- ❒ Most important _____
- ❒ Most important _____
- ❒ Most important _____
- ❒ Most important _____

Optional: I am interested in participating in a _____ (Ex. relationships) group.

Name_____ Grade_____ Homeroom Teacher_____

EVALUATIONS: Changing Families Small Counseling Group

by Michelle Wolbrette, Midway Elementary, Forsyth County

STUDENT FORM

This group was:

- ❒ Very helpful (Editor note: put 2 smiley faces here)
- ❒ Helpful (Editor note: put 1 smiley face here)
- ❒ O.K. (Editor note: put a face w/ a straight line for the mouth here)
- ❒ Not helpful (Editor note: put a face with a frown here)

The thing that helped me the most in this group was:_____

One thing that I learned about talking about feelings was: _____

One thing that I learned about having divorced parents was: _____

I wish _____

PARENT FORM

Please mark one:

- ❒ My child sees me more than my ex-spouse.
- ❒ My child sees my ex-spouse more than me.
- ❒ My child sees me and my ex-spouse the same amount.

Please indicate and explain any changes that you have noticed in the following areas since your child joined the changing families group.

The **frequency** that my child and I communicate about things related to the divorce has:

❒ Increased ❒ Decreased ❒ Stayed the same

The **quality** of communication with my child about things related to the divorce has:

❒ Increased ❒ Decreased ❒ Stayed the same

Please describe any changes you have noticed with regards to communication with your child:

_____

The **frequency** that my child expresses his or her feelings to me has:

❒ Increased ❒ Decreased ❒ Stayed the same

The frequency that my child expresses his or her feelings **appropriately** has:

❒ Increased ❒ Decreased ❒ Stayed the same

The number of angry exchanges between my child and other members of the family (including myself) has:

❒ Increased ❒ Decreased ❒ Stayed the same

Please describe any changes you have seen with regard to expression of feelings by your child:

_____

The way that my child deals with the everyday effects of divorce (transitioning between homes, one-parent home, step families, etc.) has:

❒ Increased ❒ Decreased ❒ Stayed the same

Please explain:_____

Please describe any changes that you have noticed in your child that were not mentioned above:

_____

STUDY SKILLS SMALL COUNSELING GROUP

by Joan Hill, High School

Circle one:	Not at all		Somewhat		Very
1. I am satisfied with my grades.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am satisfied with my study habits.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I manage my time well.	1	2	3	4	5
	Never		Sometimes		Frequently
4. I use tricks to memorize information.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I take good notes.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am good at taking tests.	1	2	3	4	5
	Not at all		Somewhat		Well
7. I understand my learning style.	1	2	3	4	5
	Never		Sometimes		Frequently
8. I know when it is best for me to study.	1	2	3	4	5

MENTORING PROGRAM

by Sandra Garcia and Brenda Hall, Hickory Flat Elementary School, Cherokee County

TEACHER FORM

Teacher_____

Student's name_____Mentor's name_____

1. This mentor was cooperative and worked with me regarding scheduling a time for him/her to meet with my student ❒ Yes ❒ No
2. The mentor arrived promptly and returned the child to the classroom at the agreed-upon time ❒ Yes ❒ No
3. The mentor contacted me through the office to let me know when they were unable to come at their regular time ❒ Yes ❒ No
4. The mentee has a positive attitude about meeting with their mentor. ❒ Yes ❒ No
5. Have you seen any changes in the mentee's attitude, behavior, academics, etc. since the mentor began working with the child? ❒ Yes ❒ No
   If yes, please describe these changes:_____
6. Is it your opinion that this mentoring relationship should continue into the next school year? ❒ Yes ❒ No

On the back of this sheet, please give us suggestions on how we might improve this program. Your input is vital to us in planning for the future.

MENTEE (student) FORM

Rate how you feel about what you and your mentor have done together by circling a number between 1 and 5.

Circle one:	Not True		Somewhat True		Very True
1. I am glad I have a mentor.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My mentor has become my friend.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My mentor listens when I talk.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I look forward to the day my mentor comes.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I would like to have the same mentor during the next school year.	1	2	3	4	5

Finish the sentences below:

My mentor and I_____

My mentor likes_____

I like it when my mentor comes to school to see me because_____

_____

EXPLAINING CONFIDENTIALITY TO MENTORS (printed in the Mentor Handbook)
by Brenda Hall and Sandra Garcia, Hickory Flat Elementary School, Cherokee County

The mentoring relationship is private for the mentor, teacher, parents, and students. Information shared among them is for benefit of the student. **Mentors should not discuss anything that has been shared with them in confidence regarding the student**. Only information considered necessary for you to understand the needs of the chid will be shared with you. This information may include abilities, habits, or personal information that may affect the child and his or her time with you. Mentor and mentees should understand that no unhealthy secrets or information that causes you to have concern for the safety and well being of the child will be kept private. Any information the child shares that causes you to suspect abuse (physical, sexual or emotional) or intentions of the child to harm him or herself or others must be reported immediately to the principal, assistant principal or a counselor. Because the Hickory Flat Elementary Mentoring Program is an official program of the school, it falls under the law that requires mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse to the proper authorities.

STUDENT AMBASSADORS
by Jeff Bennett, Etowah High School, Cherokee County

The Student Ambassadors program was initiated in order to promote student involvement, character education, community service, and give students a voice in decisions made in the school. In the beginning, ten students were chosen for their leadership ability and they began brainstorming how to develop this program. After a week long training, they developed a name, purpose, and mission statement for the group. Students, with the help of the counselor, developed Ambassador subcommittees such as peer mediation, teacher assistance, Special Olympics, spirit and pride, public relations, community service, orientation (for freshmen and new students), and leadership (emphasizes history and early American leadership with a field trip to

the New England States and teaching leadership to middle school students). Eventually, 180 students were involved in the program increasing school pride and interest throughout the entire school. This program has been enthusiastically received by students, teachers, and parents.

CAREER SCAVENGER HUNT

(activity to be used in conjunction with GCIS)

by Shannon Cone, Riverwood High School, Fulton County and Elaine Coyle, Marist School

Occupation_____

1. Name the work activity that you will enjoy the most_____
2. Name the work activity that you will enjoy the least_____
3. List two aptitudes you need to do this job _____
4. What is the average entry wage for this job? _____
5. Name three tools that you would use in this occupation _____
6. What are two related occupations that interest you? _____

Anger Management Groups in Middle School

Donna Wilson Ratliff

In today's violent and aggressive society, educators and parents are concerned about anger in adolescents. Anger management is a skill that adolescents often lack. If students are to be successful in their academic subjects, they must be emotionally present in class. Schools are filled with students who need help with the pressure-cooker of emotions that flood them in adolescence. (Gutloff, 1999).

"Violent and aggressive behavior among students at school can affect academic performance by directly impeding teaching and learning processes in the classroom" (Bowen & Bowen, 1999, p.14). Teaching anger management is a key component of violence prevention that can and should be taught in schools. A workable program to teach anger management to middle school students in small groups was developed through examination of current literature on anger management for adolescents.

Anger management interventions have value for everyone and can be used across all age groups. Anger management is considered to be a necessary social skill that can be taught. According to Hollenhorst (1998), coping with emotions and controlling behavior is taught in childhood, but people can benefit from training at any age in order to better cope with stressors in their lives.

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

The concern for controlling anger dates back to ancient times. Philosophers Aristotle and Seneca agreed that self-control of anger can be learned by training in rational thought and that it is desirable to do so. (Hollenhorst, 1998). These beliefs are still held today. "Programs labeled anger management vary in content and methods, but share the goal of teaching people how to control their responses to anger-provoking situations" (Hollenhorst, p.2).

Studies cited by *The Committee for Children* (1999) show that anger management techniques are teachable for young children as well as for adults and adolescents. Evidence shows that anger management strategies have helped reduce aggression in children and adolescents. Encouraging children to acknowledge anger and express it in positive ways is a challenge to educators and parents. Marion (1997) suggests that children don't have the ability to regulate the expression of their anger because they don't understand the emotion itself. Therefore parents, teachers, and counselors need to help children understand and manage this powerful emotion.

Conflict mediation and anger management training have become increasingly popular in schools. "Learning how to control rather than be controlled by emotions is an integral part of students'

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growth" (Leseho & Marshall, 1999, p. 92). According to Beasley (1999), school is the most effective place for early intervention with students who have anger management difficulties. Eggert and Long (1994) note that schools are the best setting for health-promotion programs for youth because educators and health professionals can implement and observe the effects from interventions in an on-going process. Change occurs at teachable moments. Counselors strive to create the teachable moment in small counseling groups and individual counseling (Beasley). Evaluation research indicates that school-based violence prevention programs may serve as primary prevention for children (Samples & Aber, 1998).

Anger management programs are typically designed to develop both cognitive and behavioral skills. Cognitive skills (Hollenhost, 1998) are related to paying attention to and restructuring thoughts. Learning to understand what anger is, how it develops, and how to recognize body cues is a vital part of the cognitive process. Behavioral skills involve reduction of anger arousal and learning communication and problem solving techniques. Hollenhorst believes that "within an anger management curriculum, role playing, discussion, and an effective counselor all serve to model rational thinking and social skills" (p. 4). Techniques and strategies found to be helpful for managing anger in adolescents include: recognition of physical symptoms of anger, self-talk and imagery, relaxation and deep breathing, and communication skills such as active listening and "I" statements.

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES

Letters requesting recommendations for students that might be interested in and benefit from participation in anger management groups were sent to seventh and eighth grade teachers. Students were also identified from the needs assessment given by the counselors at the beginning of the year. Identified students were then screened individually by the counselor and offered an opportunity to participate in the group. A parent permission form was sent home with the students. Eight of the seventh graders and six of the eighth graders returned the forms and agreed to participate. Two groups were established. The seventh grade group of eight students included three females and five males. The eighth grade group consisted for six males, five of whom completed the program. Each group met independently for eight consecutive weeks for 45 minutes per session. The same material was covered in each group. Each student received a folder, which included a journal page used for reflections from each session. Various handouts were distributed each week. The sessions included the use of several video clips and handouts from the violence-prevention program, *Second Step* (Committee for Children, 1993). The eight sessions are outlined as follows:

Session 1	Introduction/Survey/Definition & Anger Cues
Session 2	Anger triggers/Feelings
Session 3	Skills: Communication: "I" statements & Listening
Session 4	Skills: Calming/Relaxation/ Imagery
Session 5	Skills: Self Talk/Problem Solving
Session 6	Skills: Anger provoking situations
Session 7	Activities from Chill Out Kit
Session 8	Closure/Survey

Each session began with a review of previous tools and strategies as well as a discussion of students' weekly practice. Each session ended with an assignment to practice what was learned in the session.

EVALUATION

A survey was constructed using the key concepts to be taught in the group (see Appendix A). Three areas addressed were recognizing anger cues, skills for anger management, and techniques for handling social situations that provoked anger. A Likert scale with a rating of 1 to 5 was used with each of the 10 statements on which students rated themselves. The scale started with one being "not at all" and five being "all the time". Students took the survey at the beginning of the first session and again at the final session. Surveys were recorded for each participant and data was examined to note improvement from the pre-survey to the post-survey.

RESULTS

Scores from the Likert scale were tabulated and analyzed for improvement in the areas of recognizing anger cues, (questions 1,8,9), anger management skills (questions 2,3,10), and social situations (questions 4,5,6,7). The counselor believed the data would indicate that students could learn and practice cognitive and behavioral skills and techniques for managing anger. The anticipated results were observed to be true. Data from the 13 student participants revealed:

- 10 students reported an improvement in recognizing anger cues
- 12 students reported that they learned specific skills to manage anger
- 12 students reported an improvement in specific social situations
- 8 students reported they had better control over their anger after the group
- 3 girls and no boys reported improvement in recognizing cues and learning skills
- All student participants rated themselves as improving in some areas of anger management

DISCUSSION

The results of this study, though small in scale, suggest that school-based anger management training for adolescents is effective. The counselor observed that students were able to learn and practice anger management techniques in a small group setting. This counselor agrees with Beasley (1999), that if counselors can help angry students understand their behavior and help them use interventions, students have reason to change their behavior and reinforce their choices and responsibilities.

Participants in both groups found the video clips helpful. Each new session built on the previous one. It was noted that the students referred often to the video clips and word pictures that were introduced in the early sessions. This provided an opportunity to hook onto something as new skills were introduced.

It was observed also that the eighth grade group was more focused and cohesive than the seventh grade group. This observation could be attributed to the mixed gender in the seventh grade group, their age, or the size of the group. The seventh grade boys appeared to be trying to impress the girls. In the future I would separate girls and boys as well as seventh and eighth grade students. I also recommend a maximum of six students in the group. This does not allow the opportunity to help large numbers of students; however, I believe the process of the small group leads to better learning for those who are involved. Students who participated in the groups commented that it was beneficial to hear from their peers and encourage each other in the process.

It is important for counselors to take advantage of the opportunity they have to influence students in the development of the powerful emotion of anger. While school based anger management groups are not the cure-all to the tremendous problems caused by the anger of our youth today, they are a place to begin learning a skill that can benefit students for life.

APPENDIX A

ANGER MANAGEMENT SURVEY
Pre and Post

Please choose one answer that best fits each statement for you: (1-not at all, 2-once in a while, 3-sometimes, 4-most of the time, 5-all of the time)

Circle one:	Not at all	Once in awhile	Sometimes	Most of the time	All of the time
1. I can tell that I am getting angry by the way my body feels.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When I get angry I know how to calm myself.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have control over my anger.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I get angry when I get blamed for things I didn't do.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I get angry when teachers tell me I am wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I get angry when other kids insult me.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I get angry when my parents won't let me do something I want to do.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Other people know it when I am angry.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I hold it inside when I get angry.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My anger gets me in trouble.	1	2	3	4	5

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Groups for Children with ADHD

Claudia K. Adams

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a problem that affects a large number of children in schools. The American Psychiatric Association (1994) estimated that nationally between 3 and 9 percent of school aged children are affected by ADHD. Other estimates have approximated the number to be anywhere between one and twenty percent depending on the criteria used to define a student as ADHD (Bramlett, Nelson, & Reeves, 1997). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, (DSM-IV; American Psychological Association, 1994), breaks ADHD into three subtypes: Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Type; Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type; and Attention/Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type. Each subtype of ADHD poses a unique set of difficulties for the child. Children with ADHD, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type typically display such characteristics as difficulty in concentrating and finishing tasks, following classroom and school rules, sitting still, and organizing things (Bramlett, et al.). These behaviors are disruptive in the classroom and impede not only the academic progress of the child with ADHD, but the academic progress of the class as a whole. Children with ADHD, Predominantly Inattentive Type also display characteristics that make it difficult to be academically successful. Characteristics to look for in these children include daydreaming, seeming internally preoccupied, seeming apathetic or unmotivated, often confused or lost in thought, frequently low in energy, sluggish, or slow moving, or often staring in such a way that this behavior is noticeable (Erk, 1995a). Children with ADHD, Combined Type may display characteristics of both previously described types. In addition, children with either type of ADHD often have difficulty with peer relations as well as low self-esteem.

Strategies have been identified for teachers, parents, and school counselors that are effective in working with children with ADHD. Goldstein & Goldstein (1990) found that "practitioners are increasingly aware that multi-problem, multi skill deficits of children with ADD require a multiple treatment plan" (as cited in Erk, 1995b, p. 298). A widely used approach is to combine medication treatment with behavior modification. This has been shown to be more effective than either intervention used alone (Bramlett et al., 1997). Whalen and Hencker (as cited in Bramlett et al.) also believed that children with ADHD were more likely to benefit from multifaceted treatment programs that involved medication, behavioral programs, and parent/teacher training. In addition, self-esteem training, social skills training, cognitive restructuring, and self-instructional training were noted by Erk

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(1995b) as effective ways to address the behavioral, social, educational, and emotional needs of a child with ADHD.

The importance of involving, assisting, and educating parents of children with ADHD was highlighted in a study done by Kottman, Robert, and Baker (1995). In this study, parents were surveyed to determine their experiences and attitudes towards their children, themselves,and the professionals that have worked with their families. Specific items focused on were identifying parental concerns associated with ADHD, what parents had found most useful to them in helping to deal with their ADHD child, and the recommendations of parents as to what would be helpful in a parent training program. The predominant concern for their ADHD child expressed by respondents was academic problems. This was followed closely by concerns about self-esteem, future adjustment, and social skills. The majority of respondents listed educational materials such as books, workshops, and magazine articles as being the most useful resource to them. Also listed as useful were support groups, diagnosis, and medical intervention (medication).

Alarmingly, the least useful resource identified by respondents was the school system and school personnel. In fact, 33% of respondents stated that the educational system had not been a positive force in their lives or their children's lives.

PROCEDURES

The program used in this study was "Creative Coaching: A Support Group for Children With ADHD" (McDougall & Roper, 1998). The curriculum includes student learning and practice in the areas of self-esteem and social, organizational, and target behavior skills needed for classroom and academic success. The counselor, teacher, and parents are involved in recognizing, encouraging, and reinforcing the new behaviors as they are learned and demonstrated by the child. A list of session activities can be found in Appendix A.

PARTICIPANTS

Students were referred for group participation by their teachers. Teachers were asked to identify students they believed would benefit from learning strategies to help manage ADHD. It was specified that students did not have to have a formal diagnosis of ADHD. Once the referrals were received, prospective group members were interviewed to ascertain their interest in participation, and their willingness to complete all assignments both during and outside of group. Four groups were formed from the referrals. Membership in each group was determined by the proximity in grade level of the students, and consideration as to which students would be able to work well together with the least amount of behavioral disruptions. Parental permission was requested and received for all students participating. Group 1 consisted of four second grade students. All were Caucasian males and none had a formal diagnosis of ADHD. Group 2 consisted of four third grade students. Again, all were Caucasian males and three had a formal diagnosis of ADHD. Of the three who had been diagnosed, two were taking Ritalin and one was taking Dexadrine. Group 3 consisted of two first grade students and one kindergarten student. Of the two first grade students, one was an African American female and the other was a Caucasian male. The kindergarten student was a multiracial male. One of the males was in the process of being screened for ADHD and the other two students were undiagnosed. Group 4 consisted of three students in third grade and one in fourth grade. All of them were Caucasian males and had been formally diagnosed with ADHD. Three of the students had a diagnosis of ADHD Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive type. The fourth student is diagnosed with ADHD Predominantly Inattentive type. All students in the group were taking Ritalin. All of the

students in the study came from low-income families.

Each group met once a week for 45 minutes for a total of 10 weeks. The group sessions followed the Creative Coaching Curriculum and students were asked to complete the home practice assignments outside of the group. The parents of the students and their teachers were involved in the homework assignments in order to facilitate practice of the skills learned, provide support, and give feedback on the participants' progress. A parent workshop on ADHD was held prior to students beginning the program. The workshop was open to all parents in the school, with an additional 15 minute session to describe the Creative Coaching program for the parents of the students participating in the group. A description of the parent workshop follows. During the hour long main session, parents were given information about ADHD and how it affects children and families. Ways to work cooperatively with the school, treatment options, medication information, behavior management techniques, and parent resources were also discussed. Parents of students who would be in the study groups remained for an additional 15 minute session during which the specific requirements of their participation in the program were explained.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Parents were administered a pre and posttest for the parent workshop (see Appendix B). The test consisted of 10 statements about Attention Deficit Disorder and different aspects of treatment of children with ADHD. Parents were asked to respond with true or false answers to each statement. The purpose of the test was to assess the participant's knowledge and beliefs about ADHD prior to, and following, the information given in the workshop. Results were interpreted as an increase in the number of correct responses signifying knowledge gained about the subject. Parents were also asked to complete a subjective feedback form about the content of the workshop. This was used to assess which aspects of the workshop were more informative and useful and which aspects needed to be changed. A Behavioral Needs Assessment, found in the Creative Coaching Curriculum, was one method used to measure each student's progress in the group. The assessment was completed by both the parents and homeroom teacher of the students. The assessment was done prior to the group and following completion of the group. The form consisted of 38 positive descriptive statements about the students in each of the following areas: listening and paying attention, organization, self-concept and goal-setting, feelings, controlling impulsivity and relaxation, communication, friends, and understanding ADHD. Each statement was rated by the respondent on a Likert scale of 1-5, 1 being the child never exhibits the trait and 5 being the child consistently exhibits the trait. Results were measured by a pre- and post-test total score comparison. To obtain the total score for each student, the individual scores for each item were totaled. An increase in total score, towards a possible total score of 190 indicated an improvement by each student overall. Results were recorded in this manner for both the teacher and parent evaluations.

An item-by-item analysis was completed with one group to help determine which specific traits were improved upon by the program. The teacher evaluation was used for this analysis because it was felt that the teacher would be better able to provide information regarding classroom behaviors. Group 4 was chosen to assess as it was the only group which had a complete set of Behavioral Needs Assessments. The academic grades, conduct grades, and number of behavior referrals to the office for each student were also used to determine the effectiveness of the group. These were compared pre- and post-participation in the program. Academic grades were defined as

the average of the student's grades in Reading, Math, Social Studies, and Science. For ease of comparison, each grade was assigned a number value. Students in the upper grades (third, fourth, and fifth) are given grades of either A, B, C, D, or F. The grades of the older students corresponded to decreasing numbers beginning with a grade of A being assigned a 5. Students in the lower grades (kindergarten, first, and second) are given grades of either satisfactory (S) or (S-), needs improvement (N) or N-), or Unsatisfactory (U). The grades of the younger students corresponded to decreasing numbers beginning with a grade of Satisfactory (S) being assigned a 5.

Conduct grades were given as either satisfactory (S) or (S-), needs improvement (N) or (N-), or unsatisfactory (U). These grades were averaged and compared using the above mentioned system of decreasing numbers beginning with 5 being satisfactory. The conduct grades used for each student were from homeroom, art, music, and physical education classes. Office referrals included only those referrals made during the school day and did not include bus discipline referrals. Referrals were measured by number of times the student was sent to the office both pre- and post-group participation.

RESULTS

Each group was assessed separately to aid in the determination of the effectiveness of the program at different age levels and with differences in the medical interventions received by the students. Also, some groups had more complete data due to better parent compliance. When interpreting results, median was used in lieu of mean to indicate overall amount of change in order to obtain a more accurate picture of the data. The parent workshop results showed a median increase of two in the number of items answered correctly after participation in the workshop. Data from the parent evaluation of the Behavioral Needs Assessment indicated that almost all group members made some gain in their score, thus indicating behavioral improvement. The data for this assessment is incomplete as there were two pre-group and four post-group assessments not received. Due to the incomplete information, the increase in score for all groups was computed as a mean. The mean increases in score, toward a total score of 190, shown for each group are as follows: Group 1 = 4.5, Group 2 = 8.6, Group 3 = 12.5, and Group 4 = 5.75.

The teacher evaluation of the Behavioral Needs Assessment showed a median increase, towards a total score of 190, for all groups as follows: Group 1 = 6.0, Group 2 = 6.0, Group 3 = 11.0, Group 4 = 5.5. Data from the individual item analysis of the Behavioral Needs Assessment, completed by teachers, showed all four subjects in Group 4 increased by at least one point in the areas of listening and paying attention, organization, and understanding ADHD. One subject made gains of at least one point in all behaviors on the assessment. Two specific behaviors that each group member increased on were "Uses listening and attending to follow directions" and "Takes time to routinely organize materials".

The academic scores also showed a median increase for the majority of group members which was indicative of improvement in the students' grade average in math, reading, science, and social studies. The medium increase in grade average for each group was as follows: Group 1 = .375, Group 2 = .25, Group 3 = no increase, Group 4 = .375. Conduct scores indicated improvement among most group members. Improvement was interpreted as movement towards a satisfactory grade in conduct, which was given a numerical value of five. Group 1 showed a median increase in conduct score of .25, Group 2 improved .375, Group 3 increased .25 and Group 4 improved .375. The final item assessed was the number of office referrals for all group members pre- and post-participation in the program. The results showed that there was

a decrease in the number of referrals among almost all group members. The median decrease for each group was as follows: Group 1 = .5, Group 2 = 1.5, Group 3 = 1.0, and Group 4 = .5.

DISCUSSION

Research in the field of ADHD indicates that the most effective means of working with ADHD students is through a multifaceted program that includes the student, teacher, and parents. The results from the subjects in the Creative Coaching study support the research findings. The students who showed the most change on all measures were the students who had been diagnosed with ADHD, were taking medication, and were participating in the small group. In addition, these students also had full parental and teacher support in completion of group homework assignments. Almost all of the students in the study showed improvement in all areas; the difference was in the amount of improvement as compared to the students who were receiving more intervention strategies. The more intervention strategies employed, the greater the improvement. The Creative Coaching Curriculum showed positive results across all grade levels. It was effective with students who had not been formally diagnosed with ADHD, as well as with those who were not receiving medical intervention.

Limitations of the Study

The majority of the participants in the study were Caucasian males from a low-income socioeconomic status. The groups were not homogeneous in respect to a formal diagnosis of ADHD. There were also limitations on the data, as only Group 4 had a complete set of Behavioral Needs Assessments. There were also no comparisons made to other students with ADHD who were not receiving any intervention or who were receiving different methods of intervention.

Recommendations for Further Research

The effectiveness of the program could be assessed specifically with females, other races, or different socioeconomic groups. The group composition could also be uniform as to ADHD diagnosis and the types of intervention being received outside of school. Parental and teacher involvement could be increased or decreased to determine the effect on student success with the program. Students participating in the program could also be compared to a control group receiving no intervention or a different method of intervention.

Implications for School Counselors

School counselors are in a unique position to provide education, strategies, and support to teachers, parents, and the ADHD child. The Creative Coaching program provides an effective tool for the school counselor to teach students with ADHD the skills needed for social and academic success. In addition, the program provides counselors with methods to involve the parents and teachers in the support of the student as they generalize the skills learned in the group to classroom and home situations. Through the program, school counselors are able to incorporate a wide variety of the intervention strategies found to be helpful to students with ADHD.

In conclusion, the results of this study show that the Creative Coaching program is one that provides an effective, multimodal intervention that school counselors can use to address the needs of students with ADHD.

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APPENDIX A

Group Sessions Summary

Session 1 - Introduction
- Explain group job assignments
- Develop group rules
- Explain token system
- Get acquainted activity

Session 2 - Listening
- Ignoring distractions
- Focusing on task
- Listening for key words

Session 3 - Paying Attention
- Concentration
- Deciding what is important
- Taking time to catch details
- Benefits of paying attention

Session 4 - Organization
- Strategies
- Taking time each day to stay organized
- Benefits of being organized
- Drawbacks of being disorganized

Session 5 - Self-Concept
- Recognizing strengths and weaknesses
- Focusing on a strength
- Identifying a weakness to improve

Session 6 - Understanding ADHD
- Facts about ADHD
- Concerns and questions
- Advantages and disadvantages

Session 7 - Goal Setting
- Qualities a goal should include
- Choosing a goal to work towards
- Believing in yourself

Session 8 - Feelings
- All feelings are okay
- Ways to show feelings
- Deciding when to share feelings
- Identifying safe people to talk to
- Hurtful expression causes problems

Session 9 - Controlling Impulsivity
- Thinking before acting
- Strategies to help stop and think
- Consequences
- Pacing yourself at activities

Session 10 - Conclusion
- Review of concepts learned
- Closure activity
- Evaluation

APPENDIX B

ADD Pre-test/Post-test

1.	ADD is a disease	T	F
2.	There is a physical test for ADD.	T	F
3.	Ritalin is the only drug used for ADD.	T	F
4.	Ritalin is addictive.	T	F
5.	Decreased appetite is a side effect of Ritalin	T	F
6.	An effective treatment plan for ADD includes coaching and education	T	F
7.	Behavior contracting works well with ADD	T	F
8.	Once you put a child on Ritalin, you have taken care of their ADD and don't need to do anything else.	T	F
9.	Children with ADD may not be hyperactive.	T	F
10.	There are good things about being ADD	T	F

Stress Management for Children Coping with Life-Threatening Illness or Disability within the Family

Debra W. Thompson

The effects of stress on the physiological well-being of human adults has received much scrutiny since Hans Selye shared his research in The Stress of Life in 1956. Freedman and Roseman (1981) reported that individuals who exhibit the stress ridden Type A behavior pattern are more likely to show cardiovascular irregularities. This discovery spurred renewed interest in promoting the health of the whole person by linking the disciplines of physical and psychological healing. Current theorists (i.e., Matheny & Riordan, 1992; Sapolsky, 1998) indicate that stress and anxiety have a detrimental physiological effect on the human organism, especially if individuals do not perceive they have reasonable control over the stressors. Without perceived control, the human organism is more susceptible to diabetes, arthritis, lupus, cancer and stroke. Only recently has attention been given to children; those who are generally most lacking in perceived power.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vetch and Nicholas (1998) discussed the stress and anxiety experienced by all family members, particularly children, when a member suffers from cancer. When cancer is present within the family unit, changes occur which disrupt the family system, thereby creating stress as a result of fear of the unknown and as a result of the forced changes and new roles. Often children are too young for the new roles and responsibilities that are assigned to them. School-aged children often report feeling very worried about the future and very lonely. Children's perceived power over the situation is low.

Charkow (1998) discussed the stress of grief after the death of a loved one. Society often tries to shield children from death, which causes further stress to the child because questions are left unanswered. The child may feel guilty or somehow responsible for the death of a loved one when there is no discussion or clarification of what has happened. This is particularly prevalent when the child has witnessed the suffering of the deceased individual, but has not been given adequate explanation about the course of the illness and the cause of death. "They may also feel guilty for feeling angry or for even feeling happy while that person is dead" (Charkow, p. 119). Some children may be persistently anxious about their own death or the death of other loved ones. This anxiety may result in behaviors such as acting out, destructive outbursts, and poor academic performance and/or school phobia. Suggested strategies for counseling interventions include art and play therapies, story telling, journal writing and

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sharing recollections, emotions and experiences with other children in similar situations.

Susman (1997) examined blood cortisol levels in young adolescents while observing stress behaviors related to previously reported stressors. Cortisol levels were obtained every 6 months for 18 months. One year later the same adolescents were interviewed. It was found that those who had shown increased cortisol reactivity reported more behavior problems and symptoms of depression than those who had not shown an increase in cortisol levels. Increased cortisol levels appeared more prevalent in those adolescents who felt powerless.

Allen and Klein (1996) devised an extensive program to help anxious children relax and have greater success in school. Research revealed that anxiety diminishes performance in many problem-solving tasks, especially those dealing with abstraction and other higher-level concepts. Also reported was the relationship between anxiety and dependence. Anxiety appeared to foster dependency on teachers and other authority figures, thereby inhibiting creativity.

Brennar (1984) stated that children might experience stress on a continuum from ordinary to severe. Ordinary stress is that which occurs to most children within our society, such as jealousy of newborn siblings or the forced sharing of a personal item. The midpoint of the continuum includes stressors such as living in a single-parent family or being the object of ridicule by peers for a prolonged period of time. Near the severe end of the continuum is separation from parents or siblings because of death, divorce, or incarceration. Another example in this category is the witnessing of a parent or sibling suffering from a life-threatening illness or a permanent handicap. Severe stress, the final category on the continuum, requires children to change their personality to survive Children who experience this kind of stress must create ways to survive because society has not provided guidance in survival techniques. Examples are survivors of sexual violence or extreme physical violence. This category might also include children who have been severely disfigured as the result of accident and/or injury.

THE PARTICIPANTS

This study focused primarily on children who fit best in the "near-severe" category of Brennar's (1984) continuum. Five students were referred by teachers or parents as needing assistance in coping with the additional stressors of the life-threatening illness of a parent, sibling, or other close relative. The anxiety (A) group was made up of four females and one male, all in fourth-grade. Student A-1's and A-2's mothers have cancer and each was undergoing treatment (chemotherapy and/or radiation). Student A-3's father had recently suffered a stroke. His speech, motor function, and cognitive abilities were greatly impaired. Student A-4 has a younger brother who is autistic and suffers from asthma. Student A-5's mother suffers from depression, possibly in response to the recent losses of her mother and her sister to cancer.

PROCEDURE

A permission slip for group participation was obtained from a guardian of each child prior to the first meeting of the group. During the first meeting, introductions were made. The children were encouraged to share anything about themselves, their families, or the reason for their inclusion in the group. Group rules were established. The concept of confidentiality was discussed and each child signed a confidentiality agreement. The facilitator signed an agreement as well to help foster a sense of equality in the group. Finally, the facilitator cited examples of stressful life events such as death or illness of close family members, divorce of parents, birth of a new sibling, job loss within the family or difficulty in school. Each student agreed or disagreed that he/she had experienced each example. This interview

gave the facilitator an indication of the amount of stress to which each child had been subjected over the past twelve months.

During session two, an icebreaker was used to open the group. Next, students identified their perceived stress levels (see Table 1). Prescribed breathing and deep muscle relaxation of the upper body were taught to the children. The students then gave a post-relaxation rating of their perceived stress levels. This practice was continued in sessions three through six.

During session three, physical symptoms of stress were presented. Each child identified his/her physical symptoms by illustrating and labeling them on an outline of a child. A brainstorming session about possible ways to reduce the symptoms followed. The facilitator led the students through a short visualization/relaxation exercise. Students monitored and recorded their perceived levels of stress at designated times on three days before the next group session. The same homework was assigned for sessions four and five.

Session four began with a discussion on the emotional symptoms of stress. Students identified their own emotional symptoms and the triggers that precede them. This was followed by the book, *A Boy and A Bear* (Lite, 1996). Relaxation techniques are cleverly intertwined into a fable about the adventures of a boy and a polar bear. Students observed events of the story leading to increased and decreased levels of anxiety and generalized the anxious and calm feelings to everyday life. Finally, the facilitator led a relaxation/visualization exercise.

A visualization/relaxation exercise was presented at the beginning of session five. Then each student created a collage, which represented her/him and her/his family. Old magazines, scraps of fabric and wallpaper, glue, scissors and sheets of construction paper were supplied. Students were encouraged to talk openly about themselves and their families, past and present, as they worked.

Session six opened with a discussion about how each child was coping at home and at school. Students then played *Worried...Take Action* by Marco Products, Inc. The game promotes discussion and role-play about situations at home, at school, and with friends. Students reported perceived level of stress at the beginning of the group and at the end of the group. The facilitator led the group in a relaxation exercise.

The seventh and final session took place in the outdoor classroom area. Some of the parents attended. The session lasted for two hours during which time each student led his/her favorite relaxation exercise. After the picnic lunch and open conversation time, the facilitator read *Cool Cats, Calm Kids: Relaxation and Stress Management* for Young People (Williams, 1996). The book encourages children to relax by doing catlike exercises such as stretching, purring and catnapping. The group closed with a discussion on how to continue using the tools that had been learned from Stress Management Group. Each group member completed an evaluation of the group (see Appendix A).

RESULTS

Early in session one, students appeared to be shy and uneasy. They appeared less pensive as they introduced themselves and told why they were a part of the group. No student passed on giving information. Each student expressed an understanding of the confidentiality statement and readily signed it. Each of the girls contributed to the group rules. The boy looked on in silence. The rules were to keep confidentiality, show respect by listening to others talk, and no one is required to talk.

Sessions two through six yielded ratings on a 1 to 5 scale from each student. One rating was a report of the student's perceived level of stress at the end of the session. All students reported decreased or

unchanged levels from beginning to end of each session (see Table 2).

During the initial exposure to deep muscle relaxation in session two, the children appeared slightly resistant. However, they became comfortable with the procedure and participated in the experience. Approximately five minutes into the relaxation, one of the girls began to cry and laugh. The other students joined in the laughter. Within seconds, everyone, facilitator included, began to laugh cathartically. When the laughter subsided, the girl who had began the laughter opened her eyes and said, "Thank you so much. That felt so good".

The students showed great interest in physical and emotional symptoms of stress (first discussed in sessions three and four). Each child spoke openly about his/her own symptoms. The most commonly reported physical symptom was stomachache. The second most commonly reported was headache. Student A-5 expressed great relief in hearing that the other students shared these maladies. (Student A-5 expressed during individual sessions a great fear that she or her mother would become very ill and die.)

The most commonly reported emotional symptom was anger followed by withdrawal. The boy expressed extreme frustration and anger toward his grandmother because she isolates him from his mother. A pivotal point in the group process came when a girl, A-1, comforted him by telling him that his grandmother was probably trying to protect him because growing children might be harmed by the residual radiation from their mothers for several days after treatments. The truth of this assertion was not challenged.

The collages from session five were well received by the children. This session proved to be a support group in the truest sense, because students talked openly about their circumstances. Four of the five students expressed an appreciation for being part of a group of children with common circumstances.

Session seven was very emotional for all. Students talked about how they could stay in touch and talk with one another as needed. Every student seemed eager to lead a bit of the relaxation exercise that he/she had prepared. After the shared picnic lunch, the facilitator asked each student to complete an evaluation of the group experience. See Appendix A for the evaluation instrument and Table 3 for the results. The two mothers who were undergoing chemotherapy at the time exchanged telephone numbers, each offering to lend support to the other.

DISCUSSION

There are many children who need stress management skills. Student who have chronic, unusually stressful circumstances in their lives are more prone to serious illness. These students need help coping with the additional anxiety and stress caused by crises such as severe or terminal illness within the family. Immediate counseling intervention is indicated as a means of soothing each child's pain. Equally important is the need for a network of support and a repertoire of techniques for self-monitoring and self-soothing. Small group counseling is an excellent vehicle for each of the above. Participation in a group with children who share similar experiences allows validation of feelings and a sense of camaraderie. Being a group participant can alleviate the sense of loneliness that the children often feel. The small group setting also creates an ideal teaching environment for techniques such as deep breathing, visualization, deep-muscle relaxation, self-monitoring and feedback. Learning to control one's own level of anxiety is a tool that can be life saving for high-stress children.

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APPENDIX A

EVALUATION OF STRESS MANAGEMENT GROUP

Please circle the response that best fits your opinion. Use the following guide:

Circle one:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Stress Management Group has made me aware of ways to help control my worry.	A	B	C	D	E
2. Stress Management Group has made me aware of ways to help control my fear.	A	B	C	D	E
3. I feel better about my specific worries since attending Stress Management Group.	A	B	C	D	E
4. I feel less fearful about the future since attending Stress Management Group.	A	B	C	D	E
5. I feel more relaxed since attending Stress Management Group.	A	B	C	D	E
6. I can concentrate better since attending Stress Management Group.	A	B	C	D	E
7. Meeting with students, in Stress Management Group, who have similar worries has been comforting to me.	A	B	C	D	E
8. I have gained information that helps me cope from other students in Stress Management Group.	A	B	C	D	E
9. The counselor was comforting and helpful.	A	B	C	D	E
10. The counselor taught me new ways to cope with my worries.	A	B	C	D	E
11. As a result of Stress Management Group, I have a better understanding of how to calm myself when I need to.	A	B	C	D	E

TABLE 1

RATING SCALE FOR SELF REPORT OF STRESS LEVEL

1	2	3	4	5
RELAXED	**A LITTLE ANXIOUS**	**ANXIOUS**	**VERY ANXIOUS**	**I'M NOT COPING**
Everything is going well. I'm having an awesome day. I feel physically and emotionally strong and healthy.	All in all things are going well. I am slightly worried. I don't have physical or emotional symptoms of stress.	I am worried and I feel physically and/or emotionally unhealthy.	I am very worried. I feel very tense. I have physical symptoms and emotional symptoms of stress.	I feel so worried, I don"t know if I can continue to cope.

TABLE 2

LEVEL OF STRESS

	Beginning Rating ($\bar{x}$)	Ending Rating ($\bar{x}$)
Session 2	3.6	2.6
Session 3	3.6	2.2
Session 4	3.0	2.0
Session 5	2.4	2.0
Session 6	2.4	1.8

TABLE 3 RESULTS OF GROUP EVALUATION					
STEM #	RESPONSES FOR EACH STEM				
	A	B	C	D	E
1				2	3
2				4	1
3			1	2	2
4			2	2	1
5				2	3
6			3	1	1
7			2	2	1
8		1	3		1
9					5
10				1	4
11			1	2	2

Adventure Based Counseling Groups in the Middle School

Barbara Wolff Watters

It is well documented that modern American culture is in the throes of social change. News and research reports describe the precariousness of the traditional family as the basic social unit, the increase in violence, and what appears to be a disturbing rise in the violent behaviors and social isolation of many American youth.

As social forces continue their realignment, one institution remains relatively stable and enduring: the public school. With compulsory education comes a reasonable certainty that students may rely on the school as an environment wherein they can receive basic, pro social skill training. The codes of discipline that school systems create and enforce establish basic standards of acceptable behavior for the students in attendance. Regardless of the turbulence and transition in society at large and the variable of family stability, the school remains a viable and powerful social force reaching vast numbers of young people.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Learning via experience is often referred to as experiential learning. It relies on the developmental process through which most people learn: using all senses, thinking in conjunction with physical action, imitating and modeling, experiencing the immediate consequences of actions, reasoning built upon concrete experiences, thinking metaphorically along with concrete experiences, and in generalizing skills to other situations through practice. (Adventures in Achievement, Inc., 2000)

In 1971 an experiential learning program based on Outward Bound, a wilderness immersion course, was created (Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, 1989). A curriculum based on what came to be known as "adventure activities" and "adventure based counseling" (Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, p. 6) was integrated into the school's overall curriculum. This program encouraged a counseling relationship with students that promoted "growth through action" and "contracting and goal setting" (Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, p. 7).

The original design of the curriculum targeted two goals for students: (1) to learn to solve their problems in an efficient and creative way, and (2) to learn how to meet the challenges of the preconceived barriers to accomplishing these objectives. (Henton, 1996). The program, Project Adventure, was designed to provide experiential units

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that included warm up games, trust building activities, initiative problems, and high and low ropes elements. As part of an interdisciplinary approach to education, the goals and purposes of traditional education were integrated into the process.

Many educational reform movements also began to target integrating critical thinking skills, problem solving and processing skills into all aspects of education (Henton, 1996). As society moves into the complex era of the Information Age, using higher order thinking skills, managing more complex environments, and adjusting to the rapid rate of technological change are as essential for success as mastery of academic content. Today's children will be required to be independent, creative thinkers in tomorrow's society.

Experiential learning through adventure based counseling programs can play an important role in the pro social training of middle school students. The traditional period of transition between childhood and adolescence, middle school (6th, 7th, and 8th grade), is a time when children begin to assume more responsibility for making personal choices. The characteristic shift from parental to peer values becomes an urgent force in adolescent development. The ability of a child to make new friends, form positive peer relationships, find acceptance from peers, and behave appropriately has been found to be related to positive adjustment to school (Patrick, Hicks & Ryan, 1997).

Creative and innovative educators have implemented experiential learning programs to help children incorporate these vital skills into their behavioral repertoires. Discouraged, at-risk youth who participated in a ropes course during a summer jobs program were able to "explore perceived limitations and potential capabilities, and to enhance their self concept" (Robitscheck, 1996, p. 2). Similarly, Marx (1988) found a significant value in an outdoor adventure program: it proved to be a "concrete, action oriented, immediate way that traditional clinical counseling attempts (and with teens, often fails) to achieve in an abstract, verbal measured fashion" (Marx, p. 518).

At a time when children are naturally seeking challenges, are active and in need of experiences that promote development of positive self images and self confidence (Brosseau, Brown, Crawford, & Mensch, 1995), outdoor adventure counseling and experiential learning can be powerful tools. The possibilities are limitless for learning social competence, creating a school community based on respect and cooperation, and engaging learners through an experiential, activity based curriculum.

Because of the efforts of many creative educators, the need for effective pro social training programs for today's youth, and the guidance and inspiration of mentors who have had many years of success with the program, an adventure based counseling group was developed at North Forsyth Middle School.

PROCEDURES

Sixteen students were selected (8 males and 8 females) to participate in the Ropes course. Selection was at random among the 6th grade physical education classes except for 4 students who were recommended by their teachers because of the potential benefit to them. Two professionally trained facilitators (one male physical education teacher and one female counselor) directed all group activities. The

group met three times a week for six weeks (approximately 4 hours per week for a total of 24 hours contact time).

Each group meeting began in the Ropes room, a classroom that had soft lighting and bean bag chairs. Participation occurred either in this group or outdoors on the constructed Ropes course and grassy areas. The structure of each group session was consistent:

1. Individual goal setting
2. Setting of group goal by entire group
3. Warm up activity/icebreaker
4. Initiative or challenge activity
5. Debriefing the activity/processing

Metaphors were often used as a way of both introducing activities and understanding processes. Students were instructed in the first session that they should bring their imaginations with them to class every day. Initiatives and problem solving activities were always introduced in terms of a story. Engaging students in an imaginative activity took the focus off of the intended lessons to be learned and placed emphasis on the processes and skills required by the group to achieve their goal(s). For example, blocks of wood became magic stepping stones (able to float only under very specific conditions) which the group had to use to leave a sinking island and move to a safer place. (The activities that follow can be found in Fluegelman 1976, 1981; Henton 1996; and Rohnke 1977, 1984).

Sessions 1-3:
Warm up activities (group juggling, name game; tennis balls, add on tag) for students encouraged members to relax and learn each other's names. A tour of the ropes course and guidelines for appropriate dress were discussed. The Full Value Contract (FVC) (see Appendix A) was introduced in the second session. In the third session the students broke into four small groups and customized the FVC to fit the group's needs. All four groups came together to create one document, a Full Value Contract, that each member in the group agreed to follow. The process of the group assuming ownership of responsibility for the behavior of group members is emphasized through the creation of this contract. Each member signed the contract which was posted in the Ropes room. Additionally, each member received his/her own copy of the contract. Instruction on the specific use/value of goal setting and the specific use/value of feedback was reiterated in the first three sessions. A feedback model based on the use of "I" messages ("When you _____, I feel _____and I would like _____.") was modeled and demonstrated by the cofacilitators. The following activities were selected to promote growth of individuals and development of the group. Activity selections were determined by the cofacilitators with the goals of group and individual development and challenge.

Session 4:

Whale Watch
Challenge activity where students must balance three dimensional see saw with all group members aboard. This required cooperation, communication and problem solving skills.

Session 5:

Hog Call
A trust and communication activity which requires students to pair off, create a pair name (e.g. "peanut" and "butter"), be blindfolded and positioned in a large field and to then find his/her partner.

Yurt Circle
A trust and cooperative activity wherein students leaned in or out of circle with their full weight and tried to seek balance and to keep all members from falling.

Session 6:

Stepping Stones
A problem solving, cooperation, and communication initiative in which the group is given blocks of wood (one less than the number of students in the group) and provided with a metaphor for reaching a destination approximately 30 feet away.

Session 7:

Magic Shoes
A problem solving, communication, cooperation activity which provides the group with rules governing use of a pair of magic slippers that can be used to save the group from being tadpoles that dry up on the pavement.

Session 8:

Trust Walk
Students are blindfolded and placed in a line. The first student in line is led through the woods by the sound of the cofacilitator's clapping hands. After a journey through the woods and fields the line arrives at a string maze through the trees from which the group must emerge. Students take turns leading the group through the woods, following only the sound of the clapping hands. Communication and trust are major components of this activity.

Session 9 and 10:

Willow in the Wind *(Trust Pass)*
A sequenced trust activity that begins with pairs of students who must communicate through an established dialog and then fall backwards toward each other, move into threesomes, and, finally, move into a circle with the complete group. Students free fall back toward group members. This activity culminates in lifting a student above the heads of the group members who rock forward and back.

Session 11:

Spider Web
This activity adds a problem solving and physical challenge component to the trust sequence. Students are engaged in an imaginative dilemma where they are faced with a huge spider web that the entire group must pass through (with specific rules/limitations) in order to meet the boat that will lead them out of the dangerous Amazon.

Human Knot
Students hold onto small pieces of rope so that all students are connected. They are challenged to untangle their human knot and return to simple circle formation. Communication, cooperation and problem solving skills are involved.

Session 12:

Smaug's Jewels
Students form a circle around a section of rope that defines the castle of King Smaug who holds a foam sword and protects his jewels. Students are challenged to steal the jewels and the successful thief becomes a new King Smaug. In this warm up activity, students learn that group effort works as successfully as individual effort in stealing the jewels.

Everybody's Up
Students pair off with a partner, sit on the ground and pull each other to a standing position. They then increase their partnership from two to four and eventually to the entire group to pull everybody up. Cooperation, communication, and balance

are developed in this activity.

Harnesses, Ladders, and Belaying
Students are instructed in the use of safety harnesses, climbing equipment, belaying systems, and safety procedures for climbing. Students put on harnesses, check each other for proper use, climb a ladder to a tree limb, and jump off to experience the sensations of climbing, falling, and safety of belaying and to practice the different responsibilities involved in using high element activities.

Sessions 13 and 14:

Cat Walk
A high element that requires students to wear all safety equipment, serve in safety/equipment roles, and to climb approximately 25 feet up a telephone pole, cross a 22 foot telephone pole, and lean back in a fall to be removed from the element. This activity includes cooperative activities, encouragement/supportive roles, personal goal setting, personal challenge, and communication.

Captain's Rope
Students face the individual challenge of climbing a rope ladder to a point approximately 20 feet off the ground.

Session 15:

Can Pass and **It's a Thing - It's a Bing**
Students sit on the floor in a circle and pass two large cans using only their feet. The cans are full of (imaginary) acids (or worms or explosives) and must not tip over. *Thing/bing* involves the passing of two objects in opposite directions with required, patterned communication. Communication, cooperation, planning and goal setting are required.

Session 16:

T-P Shuffle
Students are divided into two Native American tribes that are eager to learn about the other's culture and need, therefore, to trade places. Placed on opposite ends of a ground level, horizontal telephone pole, each group must change places with the other without falling off the pole. Cooperation, problem solving, trust building, and communication are important skills for accornplishing this activity.

Sessions 17 and 18:

Zip Wire
The culminating high element, the zip line requires students to manage several jobs by assisting with ladders and equipment while students take turns climbing a tree to a platform 30 feet high and slipping off the platform to ride a pulley/rope for 100 feet over airline cable. Encouragement of others, communication, personal challenge, facing individual fears, cooperation, group cohesiveness, and trust all come together in this activity.

METHOD OF EVALUATION
During the final group meeting students completed an evaluation (see Appendix B) which asked simple, direct questions about their experiences. Evaluation in a program of personal challenge and development is difficult to quantify. Student report, both through the written evaluation and from the comments and statements that students made during the group and to the cofacilitators, was the most informative. Additionally, facilitator observations cannot be discounted as an important measure of student progress and growth.

RESULTS

Four striking areas of student growth and learning were observed in both the responses to evaluation questions and in direct observations of students in the Ropes group. The evaluation gave students the opportunity to identify three new things they learned or discovered about themselves during the Ropes Program. Students were asked to describe the most important thing they believe they accomplished and learned as well as to report on their use of feedback and goal setting in their personal lives since participating in the group.

Generally, students reported a more realistic assessment of their own abilities/competencies. Some students, by facing their fears and overcoming them, realized that they were braver than they had believed and they had gained confidence in their abilities to meet challenges. Others, in turn, recognized that they were not quite as fearless and powerful as they had believed, having backed down in situations because of their fears. This humbling experience often influenced the student's ability to "read" the fear in others and to offer encouragement when, previously, they had been less sensitive to the needs of others.

Most student responses indicated an increase in their experience of trust in the group. Improved trust in others was apparent in the activities that required students to physically depend on each other as well as in the communication that was an integral part of all group processes and activities. Students frequently cited the ability to "trust more" as something new that they learned. Often, trusting others was considered the most significant accomplishment the student believed he/she had achieved.

Certainly, the experience of trust came as much from realizing a person could physically depend on a person's self as well as on others for physical safety. In other situations, the emotional support from the group provided a sense of interpersonal safety. The group's consistent, constant, and intense level of verbal communication including giving and receiving direct, honest feedback apparently functioned to increase the students' perceptions of being able to trust others. In many environments, honest expression is discouraged because it can potentially damage relationships when improperly used. Ropes group participants learned to be comfortable with direct, honest communication of feelings and that this behavior was sanctioned by the group. They discovered that they had the personal skills to effectively mediate differences among group members and resolve conflicts before they escalated.

Conflict resolution skills were not instructed directly but structuring feedback sequences by facilitators and promoting dialog modeled conflict resolution interchanges for students. By the middle of the six week period, student initiated discussions to mediate potential conflict situations were the norm. The students gradually assumed ownership of their group and responsibility for the progress that the group made in moving through the sequence of challenges. Bullying behaviors, dominating behaviors, and passive behaviors were all addressed in ways that were not demeaning, intimidating, or rejecting. Even the meeker students began to voice their concerns about group behaviors and defend the needs of individual members. They worked cooperatively and democratically to set and accomplish group goals. Leaders emerged from within the group, allowing cofacilitators to transfer much of the responsibility for group direction back to the group itself.

The sense of belonging and responsibility among most group members served to increase communication, personalize individual and group goal setting and to increase the use of feedback. The results of the ropes group experience appeared to be improved self esteem, a sense of personal competence, development of skills for coping with interpersonal conflicts, and a strong sense of belonging in the group.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELORS

School counselors have the unique opportunity and challenge of working with young people in their natural, educational setting. As a familiar member of the school environment, the counselor can build relationships with students in an ongoing, realistic way. Yet, too often school counselors rely only on traditional classroom methods (e.g. sitting at desks or tables in brightly lit rooms, talking and using paper and pencil activities) for small group counseling and prosocial (e.g. friendship, anger management, conflict resolution, communication skills) training. To truly engage the young mind, experiential learning cannot be surpassed. Physical involvement, activities which allow students to experience personal growth, and required individual responsibility are all prerequisites for true learning in the social and emotional arenas addressed by counselors.

School counselors are teachers in the emotional/social content area and as teachers need a variety of approaches in working with young people. The vast resources of adventure based counseling are readily available in several valuable books and can provide the variety and experiential learning that engages students. From the simple use of a warm up activity to sequenced participation in a complex group problem solving challenge, the counselor can select the appropriate tool from adventure based counseling to enhance group counseling. With or without the high ropes and challenge nature of a ropes course, the sense of belonging can be developed for students by following the Full Value Contract and participating in experiential activities.

Counselors cannot mediate every conflict that arises among students in a school, but the process of observing and practicing resolution skills and honest feedback teaches students how to talk to each other and resolve their differences peacefully. Goal setting skills that are personalized for a group member and rehearsed in group each day can be generalized to other areas of academic and personal development that counselors address. An adventure based counseling group, whether it is a constructed ropes course or a modified format adapted to fit a school's particular needs, can be a fun, exciting, engaging, and successful way to work with middle school students.

CONCLUSION

Middle school students are on the precipice of adolescence and adulthood. In a society that promotes individualism, competition, aggression, and isolation, the middle school student has specific needs that can be met through participation in adventure based counseling programs. The profound importance that is associated with the sense of belonging to a group, the development of communication skills for feedback and conflict resolution, and the opportunity to challenge oneself physically and emotionally teaches middle school students about themselves and their world. Experiential learning that involves body, soul, and mind provides memorable lessons.

The school can provide a 6 week program for pro social skill building and for building personal confidence, but it cannot take over the complete job of socialization of American youth. Yet, to improve school climate, create a sense of belonging, assist in creating an environment that values and respects each individual, and to engage students in an exciting growth experience, an experiential learning program, such as Ropes group, can greatly benefit a middle school.

APPENDIX A

The Full Value Contract

Framework for Groups in Adventure Based Counseling

Commitments:

1. An agreement to work together as a group and to work toward individual and group goals.

2. An agreement to adhere to certain safety and group behavior guidelines.

3. An agreement to give and receive honest feedback, both positive and negative, and to work toward changing behavior when it is appropriate.

4. An agreement to have fun!

APPENDIX B

Niyelo
Evaluation

Today's Date _____

My Name _____ My Grade _____

1. My most favorite part of the Ropes Program is:

_____

_____

2. My least favorite part of the Ropes Program is:

_____

_____

3. Three new things I learned or discovered about myself during the Ropes Program are:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. The most important thing I did was _____

_____

5. The most important thing I learned was _____

_____

6. If I could change the Ropes Program, I would _____

_____

7. TRUE or FALSE: I now use feedback when talking with my family or friends.

8. TRUE or FALSE: I sometimes use goal setting that I learned in the Ropes Program.

APPENDIX C

Sampling of Student Responses from Niyelo/Ropes Evaluations

New things I learned about myself:

- I can tell others how I feel.
- I learned to trust better.
- I am very helpful.
- How to put on a harness.
- That I am not afraid of heights.
- That I am really, really bossy.
- How to solve a problem without screaming.
- To work together.
- Girls don't bite!
- I am more terrified of heights than I thought.
- I can do things I didn't know I could do.
- I can get along with others.
- My peers think I'm smart.
- It's easy to do team work.
- Do not be silent.
- To listen.
- I am daring.
- To encourage other people.
- Not to be scared to talk in front of a class or group.
- I can do anything I put my mind to.
- I made more friends.
- I was very brave.
- That I can help other people when they need it.
- To be able to tell someone else what I think.
- Kindness.
- To not be scared...just do it.
- How to use feedback.

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Career Guidance: A Great Motivator!

Judith Morris-Reichenbach

I became an advocate of career guidance while working at a psychoeducational center, a place often referred to as the last stop for lost children. While teaching there, I was touched by the anguish of children who were habitual failures, and who feared for their futures. I also was fortunate to witness an occasional revival of hope resurrected by a smiling, laptop-carrying vocational rehabilitation counselor, who was my inspiration to motivate and unlock potential in students who were unaware they had potential and undoubtedly felt no motivation to seek it. Career guidance does not solve all the problems of the world, but it does ameliorate some of the "dropout" problems and helps create satisfied citizens who find jobs they enjoy.

This article includes examples of how career guidance can motivate students, a variety of classroom guidance and small group activities, and some valuable technical resources.

EXAMPLES OF MOTIVATION

One recent visitor to my office was a very intelligent, articulate young man with Tourette's Syndrome and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder who was tortured by how different he felt he was from other children. He lectured at length about the technical aspects of his afflictions.

A teachable moment occurred when this bright young man was confronted with the idea that he could use the knowledge of his unique experiences to become a psychologist to support and counsel others with the same problems and concerns. A strategy was found that would help him break free of his victim mentally and work toward a goal that creates pride and a reason to be.

A high school student who gave cause for concern was on probation for stealing cars. When asked why he stole cars, he said, "Because I like to fix them up!" He then was informed of a state-of-the-art car body repair school nearby. Also, a discussion ensured regarding how he could go to this school on a HOPE Grant after high school and get a job making cars look great. Consequently, his next IEP was written stating that he was to have a field trip to this technical institute. A week later, he began a small car detailing business out of his home to finance extra school expenses. This goal not only gave him hope, but also made him a more conscientious student. Previously, he would do whatever he could to make the class miserable in the hope that if he skipped school, the social worker would not be

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called to escort him back to class. Additionally, his new behavior management plan stated that as motivation, when his behavior met specific criteria, he could drive to school the following day. He now works in the car repair business and to the best of my knowledge, no longer steals cars.

A rapport with troubled students develops when patient, non-judgmental devotion is given to discovering the root of their anger. The time spent pays off as each student develops respect for the counselor's in-depth search and, consequently, a pride in self because of the personal attention. The counselor should diligently find ways to motivate students to fly out of the pigeonholes where they have nested. Cherished moments occur when students' eyes light up and a smile replaces cynicism as the discovery is made of their "unique potential" and "transferable skills".

Miracles of untapped inspiration are witnessed as information is shared with students about the availability of the HOPE Grant and programs available at technical institutes. Following are some unique classroom activities that fueled imagination.

CLASSROOM GUIDANCE ACTIVITIES

Statistics About College

According to the U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills [SCANS] Report of 1990:

- Of every 100,000 students who enter first grade in Georgia:
  60,000 complete 12th grade
  40,000 enter the workplace with less than a high school diploma.
- Of the 60,000 who complete the 12th grade:
  30,000 enter college
  30,000 enter the workforce directly from high school.
- Of the 30,000 who enter college:
  15,000 complete a four-year degree
  15,000 enter the workforce with some college.
- Only 15,000 out of 100,000 will enter the workforce with a four-year college degree.

These statistics are shared with students who then are asked, "What reasons do you suppose students have for dropping out of high school and colleges before completing the American dream of a four-year professional degree?" Reasons given usually are lack of motivation, need money, flunked out, and/or not smart enough.

Students are assured that these reasons are valid; however, there are students who attend two-year technical institutes or colleges, learn skills, and enter the workforce in less than four years. Many young people do not attend a technical institute because they don't know that option is available. Also, most students are neither aware of what unique skills they possess, nor do they know how to match a dream to a job.

When the class is asked if anyone knows what criteria are needed for admission into a technical institute, students usually give the criteria for the HOPE Scholarship. They are told to go into their bathroom tomorrow morning, look into the mirror and blow on it. If the mirror fogs, they are eligible.

HOPE Grant

Many students believe that going to a four-year college is unavailable to them because of the overwhelming expense and academic challenges. They fear that their peers and family members will forever brand them as the ones who let everyone down. Brochures are available explaining the HOPE Grant that offers a free

education in a technical institute in Georgia. Numerous programs of study exist, including the Computer Information Program (CIS), automechanics, accounting, drafting, and hotel management. Students may now consider the prospect of going to a technical institute for free, receiving a certification in a technical area and continuing on to earn enough money to be independent, useful citizens, secure that there is life after adolescence and high school. Also, eligible students may advance to an Associate Degree and transfer some of their credits to participating four-year colleges to work toward a degree utilizing the HOPE Scholarship program. Multiple opportunities are available.

Dreams

Students in Georgia are eligible for the HOPE Scholarship and HOPE Grant to help pay their way to post secondary schools, but how do students know what they want to study or what careers to pursue? It is vital that students learn to dream and learn how to better understand themselves from their dreams. One method that encourages self-understanding is fantasy. In one classroom activity, students are asked to dream about the question, "What is your ideal career?" "Tell me yours and I'll tell you mine". They are asked to imagine that they can apprentice with anyone they want such as Picasso, Madame Curie, Edison, Einstein, Frank Lloyd Wright, John Lennon, Henry Ford, the Dali Lama, Wilma Rudolph, Sherlock Holmes, Socrates, Confucius, or Yoda. Money is no object! They can work anywhere in the world or any galaxy. They write their choices on bits of paper, which are collected into career-related hats such as a nurse's cap or a fireman's hat. Discussion continues on the significance of having goals no matter how strange they may seem today. The SCANS Report (1990) suggests that perhaps 80% of the jobs that will be available to students when they leave high school have not been invented yet! It is generally believed that any job students pursue will require technical knowledge.

After collecting everyone's papers, I share that my ideal job is to be the Queen of a Polynesian Island where women are worshipped. An explanation is given that even fantasy dreams give insight into one's self. First of all, this dream suggests a desire for autonomy. Secondly, a need is met for having fun in pleasant, warm surroundings. Lastly, this dream job indicates a respect for women in leadership positions. While reading from the slips of paper, the students' choices are briefly and respectfully linked to realistic goals. For example, a student may say that he (or she) would like to train with Hank Aaron and be a professional baseball player. That student's goal is affirmed by mentioning a pitcher who used to pitch for a local high school, and who now pitches in a major league. Additionally, it is proposed that the student could study marketing and open a sporting goods or memorabilia store, or study law and become an athlete's attorney or agent.

If someone's choice is to be a doctor, a challenge can be given for students to imagine a hospital and all the people working there other than doctors. What are their jobs, titles, responsibilities, duties, and training? If at some point along the way, being a doctor is not what the student wants, he/she should think about a related area of study. Students could visit a hospital and ask people what they do and where they went to school. They are encouraged always to be aware of what people do for a living. Students can

become interested in a job they never thought existed!

Future Fantasy

I created an activity called "Ten Years From Now..." (see Appendix A). This activity allows students to fantasize and use some computer skills as well.

Georgia Career Information System [GCIS]

For students who want to participate in a small discussion group, there is a "Career Exploration Group" that meets for six weeks. Students learn about their beliefs, interests, and talents through interest inventories, computer searches, interview strategies, exploring college brochures, and the Occupational Outlook Handbook.

A favorite group activity involves going into the computer lab or career center and taking the occupational sort in the GCIS program. Students answer 21 questions about their interests. From the results of the survey, students are given a list of occupations that fit their profiles. On a worksheet, they research those occupations for aptitudes needed, preparation, annual openings, entry wages, and related occupations (see Appendix B).

RESOURCES

Harriet Swift, past Supervisor of Student Assistance Programs in Cobb County, initiated the creation of the Cobb County Career Guidance Curriculum (1999) handbooks developed by approximately twelve elementary, middle, and high school counselors. We met a least once a month for a year to create three separate books full of engaging lesson plans and resources that can be shared with counselors and classroom teachers. The handbooks guide students through areas of self-knowledge, exploration, and preparation to aid them in making educated decisions about future career choices.

Many other programs are available to assist counselors in their career guidance efforts. Most counselors are aware of the Georgia Career Information System (GCIS, 1999) which is updated every year and contains a plethora of valuable information on colleges, financial aid, and an interest inventory, the "occupational sort".

The ExPAN (1998) interactive computer program developed by The College Board is also an excellent vehicle for discovering post-secondary options. ExPAN allows students to research and e-mail colleges, take part in career questionnaires to help them find careers that match their interests and abilities, and to investigate scholarships created from students' personal databases.

A similar program is the Peterson's Career & College Quest (1998) program which is a comprehensive interactive guidance system, enabling users to manage a database of 3,300 colleges and nearly 6,000 accredited vocational and technical schools. Students can learn from more than 1,000 job descriptions, make contact with other 3,000 hard-to-find private aid sources, select the pool of colleges meeting their needs, and, with the personal portfolio, send customized inquiry letters to colleges.

CONCLUSION

Abundant resources are readily available to motivate and excite your students. Helping students look beyond the next weekly test is definitely a challenge. The rewards are students who will be in school ready to face the next weekly test, rather than dropping out in despair and facing the much greater test of surviving in the real world without an education.

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APPENDIX A

Lesson Title: **Grade: 6 - 8**

Ten or Twenty Years From Now

Goal:

Self-knowledge

Competency:

Differentiate interests and discover values. (6th, 7th)
Awareness of individual character traits as related to jobs (8th)

Scans:

Personal Qualities

Activity:

Students read the directions on the worksheet. They will be asked to think about what their lives might be like in 10 and 20 years from now. They will read questions and take notes on specific areas such as job, family, friends, and location. Based on these notes, they will write letters or e-mails to old friends describing their lives as they would like them to be 10 or 20 years from now. They should pick the 10 or 20 year scenario.

They may also create a web page on a computer to "get the word out" to a variety of friends.

Materials:

1. See the following worksheet, "Ten Years From Now".
2. Students may use paper and pen to create a letter.
3. Students may use a computer to create an e-mail and sent it to another friend in the class.
4. Students may use a computer to create a personal Web Page.

Resource:

1. Morris-Reichenbach, Judith. "Ten Years From Now" (1999). [worksheet].

TEN YEARS FROM NOW...
TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW...

Directions:
Read the following questions and think about what your life would be like in 10 years and 20 years. Pick the 10-year scenario or the 20-year scenario and write to an old school friend you haven't seen in 10 or 20 years! Pretend you lost touch with your friend, just discovered his/her Web page on the Internet, and want to "catch up" on what is going on in your life now. Make some notes based on the following questions and begin writing your personal letter, e-mail, or Web Page for your friend to see.

Where do you live? City, Country, Planet? What kind of lifestyle do you have?

What type of job do you have? (Salary, work conditions, duties, position, title?)

Do you have a spouse? Children? Pets? What are they like?

What are your hobbies, interests, community, and leisure activities?

What are the best things about your lifestyle, job, and activities? How are they connected?

What would make your life better?

Now create your future...

Judith Morris-Reichenbach 1999

My worksheet: _____

CAREER EXPLORATION

Look at the list of careers suggested to you as a result of your taking the GCIS "sort". Research 5-9 occupations from that list that are of interest to you. Answers to the following categories are found in the upper left side of the screen index box. Click on a subject, read the information provided, and put the requested information in the boxes below.

OCCUPATION	APTITUDES	PREPARATION	ANNUAL OPENINGS	ENTRY WAGE	AVERAGE WAGE	RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Judith Morris-Reichenbach 1999

Cultural Diversity: Effective Activities to Promote Cultural Awareness

Debra D. Delaine

INTRODUCTION

The United States has been historically known as the "melting pot" of the world which is a blend of different cultures, races, religions, and ethnic groups. A quilt of many colors is another phrase that perhaps better explains the diversity of our nation. Each culture retains its individuality while becoming part of the American family.

As increasing numbers of children from different cultures enroll in public schools, negative reactions towards new students are sometimes expressed. Realizing that some children, like some adults, tend to react negatively to something they do not understand, broadening the guidance program to include a unit on cultural diversity became a priority.

In response to the growing cultural diversity of students the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) has taken two major measures to ensure that the specific needs of all students are met. First, recognizing that cultural diversity is an important factor meriting increased awareness and understanding on the part of school counselors, ASCA (1988) prepared the following position statement on cross/multicultural counseling: "School counselors must take action to ensure [that] students of culturally diverse backgrounds have access to appropriate services and opportunities which promote maximum development." (p. 4) Second, ASCA (1992) published the revised American School Counselor Association Ethical Standards for School Counselors which mandated that competency in multicultural counseling is an ethical obligation of school counselors. The shortage of multicultural programs has been a major concern for our culturally diverse parents and their children, as well as for staff members within the educational system. (Changizi, Cureton, Gridley, & Kiselica, 1995).

DEVELOPING A PROGRAM

In planning a unit on culturally diverse groups, I reflected back on the multicultural unit that was provided to counselors in South Florida during the mid 1990's. There was a growing number of diverse populations moving into the area and the need to promote awareness and understanding was a concern for the counseling department. There were several activities counselors utilized to have a positive impact on student awareness. After implementing these activities through classroom guidance lessons, positive feedback from both students and teachers

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was given. Based on these activities that were very successful with students in grades 3-5, I began to incorporate some of the department's ideas with my own style to create other activities that can be used at all grade levels.

An integral part of classroom guidance are activities focusing on tolerance, understanding and appreciating differences and similarities, stereotyping, and discrimination. Below are several activities which are useful in promoting a better understanding of cultural diversity.

ACTIVITY 1

Grades 3-5: "Jumping to Conclusions" (a stereotyping activity)

Before this activity begins, a discussion on the words "stereotyping" and "discrimination" takes place. Most children are familiar with the words but are unsure of the meanings. The words are defined, discussed, and examples are provided. Once students have a good understanding of the words, students are divided into groups of four, and one member from each group pulls a description of a person out of a hat. An example of one description is:

> *Cristina...22...long hair...she is dressed in a miniskirt, tanktop, and is wearing high heel shoes.*

One person from each group reads the description to other group members and, as a group, they decide what type of person it is based on the description they are given. They write their answer on a sheet of paper and wait for further instructions. Once everyone finishes, each description is repeated to the class and the group with the matching description responds by reading what they think the missing information is about the person. After all groups are finished, the descriptions are reread including information about the person that was purposely omitted. Students are able to see how easy it is to stereotype a person from the little information they were given. The omitted information for the above example is:

> *Cristina attends the School of the Arts and she's on her way to a play in which she has the leading role. She's running late, so she decided to wear her costume to the play instead of changing into it when she arrives at her performance.*

This exercise was repeated using other descriptions provided by the students.

To begin the lesson on understanding and appreciating differences and similarities with younger students, an activity from Childrens' Television Resource and Education Center called "Getting Along" is used. This entire series uses animals to discuss various topics on teasing, fighting, disrespect, bullying, and other topics. Within this series, there is an activity on tolerance. It involves a short story about a zebra named Zeffer. Zeffer explains he's left out of activities with the other zebras because he looks different and being left out makes him feel sad. When the story is read to the students they are unaware of how he looks, only that he looks different. Once the story is completed a picture of some zebras and Zeffer are shown with Zeffer being excluded. The class is asked to tell what they see in the picture. Most of the students recognized that Zeffer's stripes run in a different direction than the other zebras. The direction the discussion takes at this point varies from class to class, but it always

leads to identifying the differences and similarities in racial and ethic groups. Once this activity is completed the following activity is implemented.

ACTIVITY 2

Grades K-2: "Tell Me About..." (a similarities and differences activity)

Each student is given an apple, either red, gold, or green. There is a discussion about the similarities and differences of the apples. During the discussion, a chart is made to show the similarities and differences. The children generally conclude that the only differences between the apples are color, size, and texture; regardless of the differences, one apple isn't better than the other. The children are able to relate this activity to the one on tolerance. Children are able to reflect back on Zeffer the zebra and compare how, in both activities, differences and similarities do not make one person better or worse than another. Through discussion the children indicate they understand that it's acceptable to have one's own individuality as long as it's not used to make one person act superior over another.

Another activity that older children enjoy is a multicultural bingo game. This game helps students become acquainted with each other's culture by focusing on ethnic uniqueness. If someone in the classroom belongs to a culture the children aren't familiar with, the student (depending on the child's comfort level), tells the class about his/her culture and what he/she has found different in the United States and what is similar. This report can lead into a good discussion of similarities and differences.

At the conclusion of the unit on cultural diversity students indicated that they enjoyed learning about different cultures and they looked forward to the various activities. The older students wrote a two paragraph statement on what they learned. Their names were not written on their paper in hopes it would elicit honest responses. Verbal feedback was solicited from the younger students and provided them an opportunity to express their ideas and thoughts.

CONCLUSION

"Historically, ethnic minority families have held educational attainment in high esteem, considering the potential benefits of educational advancement. Unfortunately, the educational system is not always sensitive to the needs and challenges faced by racial/ethnic minority children and their parents. Cultural beliefs and traditions established in the home are often devalued in the school setting". (Cole, Thomas, & Lee, 1988, p.110).

Cultural diversity is a unit that can add many creative and fun activities to classroom guidance plans. Cultural awareness, however, should not be limited to classroom guidance activities, and counselors should not be the only promoters of awareness within the school's environment. In order to effectively promote cultural awareness within schools, it takes the cooperation, dedication and commitment of administrators, teachers, staff and parents. Children learn not only from what we say but also from what we do. If they see the entire school environment promoting cultural awareness they will hopefully strive to be more consciously aware of what they say and do. All children, regardless of race, culture, religion, or ethnic group, are entitled to public education and their educational experience should be one they can look back on and smile about because they were accepted for being themselves.

"The lifelong task of becoming a competent, multicultural counselor is filled with profoundly fulfilling opportunities, such as clarifying one's own values, confronting one's fears and biases regarding the culturally different, developing new counseling skills, and experiencing the beauty of other cultures." Changizi et al. 1995, p.532).

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Creating A New Circle of Friends

Joan S. Gill
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INTRODUCTION

Increased violence in the schools and the impact of large numbers of families relocating for job-related or personal factors make it more important than ever for students to feel a sense of belonging. New students often experience difficulties in feeling like they fit in; therefore, providing special programs to help with their transition is a valuable service counselors can offer.

ELEMENTARY WORKSETTING

In the 1998-99 school year, 206 children transitioned to or from State Bridge Crossing Elementary School, which represents a large number of students who did not experience the first day of school with other classmates. Consequently, they did not benefit from tours of the school, or from explanations about school policies and procedures.

Often, elementary-aged children have not acquired the skills needed to make new friends. Transitioning students must try to fit in when many classroom friendships already have been established. Unless helpful interventions take place, these children are often left out of activities, particularly at recess, or must sit alone at lunchtime.

At State Bridge Crossing, the counselors recognized the need for making a positive difference in the lives of new students and developed several programs and activities to help make a new student's first day at the school a memorable one. Following are examples of the many programs offered at State Bridge Crossing.

1. A welcome pack is given to each new family which includes a SBCE pencil, coin purse, magnet, sticker, coupons, information about after-school programs and community activities, and other information to help welcome the entire family.

2. A "New Kid on the Block" (see Appendix A) is assigned within the classroom so that a peer buddy is ready to greet the new children, introduce them to others, and make the first few days easier. These buddies have been trained in being a "New Kid on the Block".

3. The counselors sponsor "New Kid on the Block" get-togethers throughout the year. Refreshments and activities during these

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get-togethers help new students feel special outside of the classroom. A peer often escorts new students to these events. Activities include icebreakers, stories, and word games that provide important information about the school.

4. Throughout the school year, on an as-needed basis, the counselors hold new student groups. These groups meet two or three times, to give the children a chance to relate to others and share their feelings about the challenges of moving.

MIDDLE SCHOOL WORKSETTING

Sandy Springs Middle School serves a student population that reflects cultural, geographic, and economic diversity. With a 41% mobility rate there is an average of 20 new students enrolled each month throughout the year. The total school population is about 720.

To help the new students assimilate and to feel they are not alone, the counseling office gives Welcome Parties at the end of each month. Invitations are sent to all new students for the month and the STARS (Student Tour Ambassadors Representing the School) serve as hosts of the parties, which are held in the counseling conference room. Usually the parties are held by grade level to help create a closer-knit group. By meeting with other new students newcomers are able to see that they are not isolated. Many times a connection is made between them based on common experiences or previous locations of residence. Often friendships develop just from this one event, making it a meaningful experience for counselors to coordiante.

The PTA provides a "goodie bag" containing candy and a school pencil for each new student. The student hosts serve cookies and juice and, when possible, the principal drops by to personally welcome the newcomers. Through icebreaker activities and casual conversation participants get to know each other better. The counselor addresses any concerns or questions students have about the school.

The hope is that when the party is over, new students will feel they are accepted as important additions to the school and community.

HIGH SCHOOL WORKSETTING

Teenagers who relocate have different difficulties than younger students, depending on their grade level. Juniors and seniors, for instance, are often in the midst of planning for college and are faced with deciding how their new place of residence will effect their choices. Adolescents, too, often must deal with trying to be accepted into established groups of friends who might have grown up together. At this stage of development, many new students find the transition to a new school a long process and benefit from services that extend beyond a one-time event.

At a north Fulton high school of over 2,000 students, the following programs have been implemented:

1. New student support groups of 8-12 students meet once a week for five or six weeks. Sessions include introductory activities, discussions about the differences between the former and new school, what students like about the new school, goals for the future, etc.

2. A new student survey (see Appendix B) is distributed to each new student. Responses on the completed surveys provide valuable information to the counselors about the newcomers' needs.

3. A newcomers' party is held on an

evening the week before school starts for all students who have moved into the area over the summer. In addition to offering food, get-acquainted activities are held and door prizes (donated by local stores) are given.

4. The "First Friends" program is composed of volunteer students (mostly former new students) who serve as lunch buddies for new students, and assist with the newcomers' party and groups.

SUMMARY

Feedback given to the authors through written student evaluation forms and by verbal communication from former new students indicates that programs to help students adjust to their new schools made a positive difference for them. The activities described are a small sample of those that assist students in transition. School counselors are encouraged to offer these services to new students.

APPENDIX A

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

Dear Teachers:

In addressing the unique needs of our transitioning students throughout the year, the counselors would like to announce the following:

1. Please recruit students out of your class to be "New Kid on the Block Buddies" to our new students. As you are aware, State Bridge Crossing has a high degree of student transition and this can be very challenging for these new children. These New Kid on the Block Buddies should be willing to:
    - answer questions about our school.
    - introduce student to others in the class.
    - sit with him/her at lunch and include in the conversation with others.
    - encourage participation with others at recess.
    - answer other essential "need to know" type of information.
    - be a special friend.

2. The counselors also would like to announce our ongoing New Kid on the Block get-togethers that are held every Monday from 8:00 until 8:30 in the counselor's suite. Please encourage your new students to attend at least one session. We plan many activities and small group discussions to help these children feel a sense of connectedness to our school family. Your New Kid on the Block Buddies may attend the first group with the new student. Thereafter, the new student may attend on an as needed basis.

Thanks for all you do each day to help bring a smile to the faces of these children!

APPENDIX B

NEW STUDENT SURVEY

To:_____ _____Homeroom:_____

From:_____ _____ (Counselor)

Date:_____

Because you are a new student to Fulton County and to _____ High School we want to help you, in any way we can, to make an easy adjustment to your new environment. Please take a minute to fill out this form. You can ask your homeroom teacher to put it in my mailbox or you may drop it off at the counseling office for me.

Welcome to_____!

Please place a checkmark next to the statement(s) with which you agree.

❒ I'm having a hard time meeting people in school:

- ❒ Please help me find another student to each lunch with. I have lunch _____ period this term.
- ❒ I'd like you to choose a "First Friend" for me – a student volunteer who will call me at home and arrange to meet me in or out of school. My home phone number is _____.

❒ I'd be interested in participating in a small newcomers support group. Please tell me more about this possibility.

❒ I have other difficulties as a new student I'd like to discuss with my counselor. My problem(s) is/are:

- ❒ Academic (tell us more)_____
  _____
- ❒ Personal
- ❒ Other (please tell me a little more)_____
  _____

❒ I'm doing fine, thanks, and don't feel a need for any help at this time.

Do you have any other questions about the school? What? _____
_____

Additional comments: _____
_____
_____

Call for Submissions

The Editorial Board of the *GSCA Journal* is requesting that practicing school counselors, supervisors, counselor educators, and other professionals interested in the promotion of school counseling in Georgia submit articles for publication in the next issue of the *Journal*.

Articles which highlight the positive outcomes of counseling with students and/or which support the accountability of school counseling programs in Georgia are of particular interest to our readers. Manuscripts which address ethical/philosophical issues relevant to school counseling, describe successful school counseling techniques and practices, review books and other media products of interest to school counselors, poetry and other creative writings will also be included in the issue.

For more information regarding the *Journal* contact Fran Mullis, Editor, in writing at GSCA Journal, 190 Hamilton Way, Roswell, Georgia 30075; by telephone at (404) 651-3421; or by e-mail at fmullis@gsu.edu. Submission deadline for articles is April 1, 2000.

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1. All manuscripts should conform to the guidelines for publication listed in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 4th Edition.

2. Submit an original and two copies of the manuscript.

3. Submit a cover page with the title of the article, the name, title, institutional affiliation, address, and telephone numbers (day and evening) for each author, and the date of submission. Author identification should not appear on any other page of the manuscript so that the Editorial Board may conduct an anonymous review of the document.

4. Do not submit previously published material or material that is currently under consideration by another publisher.

5. Author(s) bear full responsibility for the accuracy of references, quotations, tables and figures.

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